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A Short History of 

INDEPENDENT

METHODISM 

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A SHORT HISTORY

OF

INDEPENDENT METHODISM.

A SOUVENIR

OF THE

HUNDREDTH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

INDEPENDENT METHODIST CHURCHES,

1905.

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PREFACE.

THE brief chapters which follow, though historical in character, are not presented as containing a consecutive history of Independent Methodism. The purpose has been to gather into a small volume a number of facts which are likely to be read with interest on the occasion of the celebration of the Hundredth Annual Meeting.

From the year 1797 the early Churches of our denomination held much useful intercourse, but it was not until 1806 that they formally joined themselves into an organisation. Since the Annual Meeting of that year was described as the first, it follows that the Meeting of the present year—1905—becomes the Hundredth. To mark the occasion the General Committee decided upon the issue of the present volume and entrusted its preparation to George Hunter, James Vickers, and Arthur Mounfield—the latter to fulfil the duties of Editor.

Thanks are due to correspondents in the various districts who have gathered materials and provided the photographs, which so greatly add to the interest of the narratives. Special indebtedness must be

acknowledged to James Vickers, who has given much help and suggestion, and who contributes the chapter on "Our Principles and Polity."

The collecting of the historical materials has been a most interesting task, and it is a matter of regret that only a small part of what has been gathered can be included in the volume. The demands of space have made it necessary to reduce the sketches of individual Churches to small proportions, and in the process it may seem that the most attractive and helpful portions have been removed.

The earlier chapters, too, from the same cause, are wanting in completeness, and must be regarded as gleanings from early narratives rather than—as was at first intended—a connected history of our first Churches.

All the materials will, however, be carefully kept and may form the basis of a larger if not a permanent history at a later day.

ARTHUR MOUNFIELD.

WARRINGTON,

April, 1905.

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ERRATA.

- PAGE 54, line 9—*read* John Wood.
 „ 95, line 7—*read* mutual help.
 „ 99, line 28—*read* 1876.
 „ 113, line 15—*read* Peterloo.

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BEGINNINGS.



THE close of the eighteenth century and the opening of the nineteenth was a period of much promiscuous religious effort. The Methodist Church had framed its organisation and established its itinerant ministry. But the wave of evangelical fervour had not spent itself, and it was discovered that in many quarters there were those who were not ready to confine their work to prescribed limits or accept a privileged itinerancy. It is strange indeed, that men whose fathers had violated every fixed usage and gained the title Methodist, in derision because of it, should have proceeded to plan the most highly organised society the religious world yet knows. That they should have failed to make it sufficiently elastic to include Alexander Kilham in 1797 is remarkable; that they should (a dozen years later) have excluded Hugh Bourne for open-air preaching is more remarkable still. It was inevitable that there should be secession. Methodism was militant against evil, and had produced strong men; in the nature of things such zeal as Methodists had could not be wholly forced into stated and orderly channels. Only an elastic Methodism could have remained a united Methodism.

This crystallisation of Wesley's Church raised grave anxieties, which were not confined to any one grade of the Society. Only those who have studied closely the documents of the period realise how narrowly the denomination escaped a serious cleavage. For a time William Bramwell, a man eminent and scarcely second in influence to any of his brethren in the ministry, openly sided with the "revivalist" party, and went to the point of open separation. Those who have read the funeral sermon, preached on the occasion of his death by the eloquent William Dawson, will remember the rhetorical passage in which he describes this period of his life. To William Bramwell the new Conference-made Methodism, so different from the Methodism he loved, was a

grim monster, which threatened the very existence of the Church. Said Dawson, "But when his brethren softened down the distorted features of the detested object which his trembling hand, at the instigation of his jealous heart, had drawn; when they proved that in the present state of the Methodist body the evils of a schism and division would be much greater than the evils which he lamented and deplored; when they drew the picture of the monster division, . . . he retraced his steps and lived and died in union with his brethren."

We mention this crisis in the history of Methodism because it gives explanation of the lesser Methodist bodies which began their existence about that period. The Camp Meeting Methodists, afterwards the Primitive Methodists; the Kilhamites, afterwards the Methodist New Connexion; the Revivalists of Leeds; the Tent Methodists of Bristol; the Magic Methodists of Delamere Forest; the Band-Room Methodists of Manchester and Independent Methodists of Macclesfield were all offshoots from the Old Connexion which based their separation upon the enforcing of the constitution.

The immense influence of Bramwell would have changed the entire history of Methodism had it been wielded on the side of freedom, but the entreaties of many friends brought him to the point of submission.

The first marked dissention took place in 1796-7 and resulted in the formation of the Kilhamites, a body much better known by its later title, The Methodist New Connexion. It is evident that the period was one of wide-spread disappointment. There were Methodist meetings, which declined to identify themselves with the organised society, and before the secession of Alexander Kilham many had quietly withdrawn to establish meetings in which greater freedom might be enjoyed. It was from the joining of such Churches after a few years of separate effort that our denomination has sprung. Of their first intercourse we know little. Preaching visits were interchanged through several years, but it was not until 1805 that proposals for a formal union took place. It seems probable that a representative meeting was held in that year in Manchester, but we know nothing of its constitution, nor do we know the date or place of meeting of the following year, which came to be regarded as the first Annual Meeting. The Churches represented centred round the districts of Manchester, Warrington, Macclesfield, Oldham and Stockport. The Manchester, Macclesfield and Warrington Churches dated from 1796-7, and one at least of the societies dated from 1785. We

needed to raise the question of joining or seeking recognition of the new Churches would have seemed to be required. The first meeting was intended to settle the matter amicably and in settling the order in which the names should be written followed the agreement just described. The names were given as follows: Manchester, Warrington, Salford, Bolton, and appear thus in the early minutes.

We describe the crisis of the Manchester Church as the last episode of the eighteenth century because it is necessary to an understanding of the period in which our new Churches were formed. It would be a mistake however to regard it as representing the genesis of the Churches. Our new Churches did not come into existence upon a protest, nor were the men who composed them wholly Unitarian.

The Society at Bolton was an offshoot from the Established Church and the Warrington people, even with the Unitarian influence, came from a meeting of Quakers and Unitarians, and would as we shall see, have probably had an existence apart from any Churches which were taking place elsewhere.

James Smith		John Smith	
John Smith		Thomas Smith	
William Smith		John Smith	
James Smith		John Smith	

SIGNATURES FROM PROPOSAL DATED 1800

THE QUAKER-METHODISTS OF WARRINGTON.



JOHN MORLEY has said: "Simplicity is the key-word to every revolution with a moral core."

If this be so the Quaker-Methodists stood in the succession of true reformers. "Apostolic simplicity" was a phrase often upon their lips, and a craving for it lay deep in their hearts. How well they succeeded in realising it must be gathered from their history; how successful the type of society they formed must be judged from the type of character it produced.

The origin of the first society at Warrington is a matter of deepest interest, for though not the oldest in point of years it became the formative agency of the denomination. It was the privilege of the Society to have within its fellowship men of fine intellectual power. From Warrington went forth the men who first expounded the principle and whose own society could always be pointed to as an object-lesson of the ideal they proclaimed. Above all it was from Warrington that Peter Phillips travelled forth to preach so ably for more than half a century, and to reveal in a life of wonderful devotion the reality of the principles which the Church professed.

The Quaker-Methodists have been often described as a society that separated from Methodism as a protest against existing usage. Such a statement is far from describing the facts and would not be fair either to the old or the new body. Indeed, the story of the formation of the Society has not hitherto been fully told. It was not as a protest against current usage so much as an unwillingness to accept a new order that the Warrington Society began a separate existence.

By the recovery of an interesting manuscript we are able to form a clear idea of the sequence of events during the

important years 1795 to 1797. The Methodists of Warrington had proceeded along primitive lines. The last visit of John Wesley in 1790 had left them a useful and prosperous people. Chief among their agencies was the cottage meeting. In the homes of a number of Methodists these weekly services had been conducted for a number of years. It is in connection with them we first hear the mention of some cherished names. Peter Phillips was then a young man scarcely twenty years old, yet full of promise. Hannah Peacock, who in after years became his wife, was also a member of the cottage gatherings. Both had been early impressed and both, in the first mention of their names, appear in the character of soul-winners.

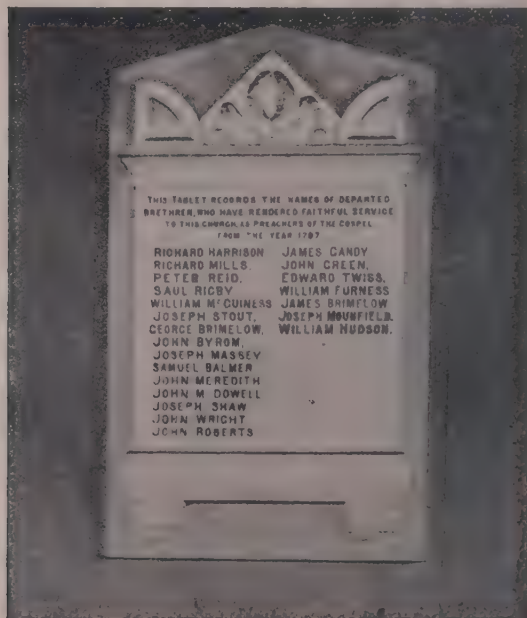
Up to this period the ministry of the Methodist Society had been almost entirely that of the home preachers. Only occasional visits had been paid by the itinerant ministers of the Northwich circuit. It was not for some seventeen years that a Warrington Circuit was formed, and the position of the Church was not unlike that of the many country meetings, whose chief ministry comes from their own membership.

So self-contained had the Society been and so little dependent upon outside help that a meeting was actually held at which it was decided to suggest to Conference that it be left without an itinerant ministry. A manuscript which came to light a year or two ago records the holding of this meeting, but unhappily does not supply the date. The omission is unfortunate, for a knowledge of the date would probably help us to understand the after action of the itinerant ministers.

From reasons which are unknown to us the cottage meetings were forbidden, and the pulpit of the chapel in Bank Street was placed under the control of the minister in whose district it was placed. In the arrangements for preaching the "local" preachers would perhaps have acquiesced, but the demand for the closing of the home meetings brought a crisis. There were men of independent spirit serving in the local ministry. They had been accustomed to simplicity in Church life and to the free exercise of gifts; they had enjoyed the Methodism of the days of its founder. A Conference-made Methodism which demanded obedience to an itinerancy they could not accept.

Their attitude is easy to understand, and allowing that their view was taken in sincerity they took the only course open to them. The meetings continued, but they were no longer Wesleyan meetings. There was no wrench from

Methodism and no demonstration. If there was strife its echo has not reached us. We have no record of suspensions or conflicts with the parent body. Indeed the men and women who had thus unconsciously begun the life of a new denomination—if we may judge them by later years—were not disposed towards strife. There was argument, much deep concern, much searching of heart, but it is pleasant to feel that in our inheritance there is no word or



MEMORIAL TO PREACHERS, FRIARS GREEN.

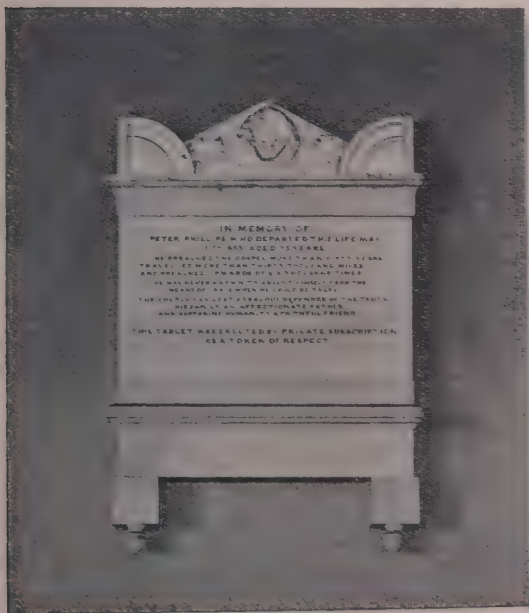
motive of bitterness and no painful incident of severance to tinge the memory of the past with regret.

Among the preachers who formed the first Society the names of others have not been handed down—were Richard Harrison, Richard Mills, Peter Reid, Saul Rigby, William McGuinness and John Meredith.

Peter Phillips was then in his nineteenth year and can scarcely have had a leading voice in the counsels of the

society : yet the crisis strongly affected him and stirred him to much thinking. To his son William—who wrote an interesting manuscript biography after his father's death—Peter stated that the circumstance caused him to study carefully the New Testament type of Church and led him to conclusions from which he never found reason to depart.

Perhaps this enquiry into New Testament practice had



MEMORIAL TABLET TO PETER PHILLIPS.

much more to do with the course of events than might at first be supposed, for Peter Phillips was influential beyond his years. When their position was assailed it was Peter who gave the historic answer that "If it could be shown that a man's preaching was better because he was paid for doing it they would admit their error," and it was Peter who laid down as a guiding maxim for his friends "We have a right to our views, but no right to be angry with those who differ from us."

The separation took place in 1796. The meeting at which they formally organised a society is stated to have taken place "in a room behind the premises, then a grocer's establishment, next door to the Rose and Crown in Bridge-street," but the date has not been preserved.

This room served as a meeting place for some little time. Approached from Rose and Crown Street by a staircase, it would prove a central and convenient meeting-place. The premises—now part of an electric lighting store—still exist, and though devoid of beauty and interest are worthy of remembrance as the scene of an historic meeting.

Whilst there were those in Methodism who refused to depart from its primitive simplicity, there were those in another historic society who were feeling a dissatisfaction of another kind. The period of greatest activity in Methodism was the period of greatest depression in the Society of Friends. The once-glowing metal had cooled in the moulds. Quakerism at the end of the eighteenth century was a thing of form only, and not the power, and we can well suppose that the triumphs of Methodism would bring to many Friends a noble dissatisfaction.

George Fox had been as active in evangelism as John Wesley; why should his society have ceased to carry on his work?

To those who shared this feeling the Warrington Society would have many charms. It had a free ministry, and believed in the ministry of women; above all it was splendidly evangelistic. Several Quakers became members, but we do not, unfortunately, know much of their personal history. At the home of one of them preaching began to be held. This was Peter Wright, of Stretton. The house in which he lived still stands, the central house of three at the south corner of Well Lane on the Northwich highway. It is significant that while the first meetings were held in a Methodist home the second flourished in a Quaker household. After all it is no wonder that outside observers hit upon the title "Quaker Methodists." There was not only an actual mixing of Friends and Methodists; the Methodists took over Quaker dress and adopted the plain language. Yet another title was found for them, "The Singing Quakers." This also is easily understood, for our pioneers, while refusing instrumental music, were then and always great in song. That members of the Society of Friends should have become ardent singers can only be explained by the supposition, that like those from whom they learned, they were full of zeal for the salvation of men.

The third meeting of the Quaker-Methodists was formed at a house in Whitley Reed, also in Cheshire. At this homestead Peter Phillips made his first attempt at ministry. The text of the sermon was Job xxxiii. 28, 29, "*He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*"

Thus, on a Sunday afternoon in 1801, began the ministry which carried light and consolation through more than fifty years.

The next meeting to be formed would seem to be that at Statham. Here again a homestead formed the meeting place. The date was 1801, and the meeting was held in the house of Joseph Howard. After some years of usefulness the place of meeting was removed to the house of William Bowker, who resided in Lymm. William Bowker had been a member of the Established Church, but was brought under conviction by a sermon of Peter Phillips, and henceforward became the guiding influence in the Church. After some years had elapsed a chapel was built. This was succeeded by the present Cherry Lane Chapel, built in 1849.



PETER PHILLIPS.

THOUGH one of the youngest members of the first society in Warrington, Peter Phillips has by general consent been described as its founder. From this has followed the wider description—"Founder of Independent Methodism." We cannot suppose that Peter was regarded as the leading spirit in the formation of the



PETER PHILLIPS.

new society, for though gifted beyond his years he had not yet reached his nineteenth birthday when the crisis came in 1796. It was at the end and not at the beginning of his career that he was hailed as founder of the denomination. A title which he himself would have been swift to repudiate was placed upon his grave-stone by loving hands, and from thence has passed into current speech.

Yet however much we may recognise the unlikelihood on the ground of youth, several things seem to indicate

that Peter Phillips had a unique influence. He had a keen and logical brain and was the first to think out the principle of a Quaker-Methodist Church. The majority found themselves separated from Methodism and without any clear ideas as to their future. It was Peter who laid bare the rock foundation of New Testament principle, and taught them to build. What is more, he brought to the task a transparent sincerity which disarmed criticism and won respect. Half a century of magnificent usefulness made his influence supreme. Whether the founder of [the



HANNAH PHILLIPS.

denomination or not he became its patriarch and crowning ornament.

Let us hope that some day we shall have a worthy record of his fruitful and noble life. For the present reference, one or two hitherto unrecorded facts and incidents must suffice.

His father, John Phillips, was one of the picturesque figures of old Warrington. As town crier he displayed every day the glories of a scarlet coat and velvet breeches, with the added peculiarity of a pig-tail of plaited hair. His wife was

a native of Manxland, by name Jane Crane, and Peter was the fifth child in a family of twelve. The intemperate habits of their father made home an unattractive place and left the children without an education. Sunday schools, however, in those days taught reading and writing, and at an Anglican school, Peter, with an elder brother, John, learned to read and write. The influence which led to the conversion of both originated with Hannah Peacock. Though excluded from home by the cruelty of parents, she was leading a devoted life, and induced John Phillips to listen to a sermon by Thomas Glazebrook. A period of depression followed, from which he was only raised by the interest and help of a good Quaker woman named Watts. Peter also came under her influence, and was guided well. The house in which this good woman lived afterwards became the District Bank and still stands at Friars Gate. John and Peter Phillips became thenceforward members of the Wesleyan Sunday School. John became an itinerant minister of the society, and served faithfully as such until his ninetieth year. Peter was a channiker by trade and followed his calling through life. In 1802 he was married to Hannah Peacock, with whom he had been a fellow teacher in the Wesleyan School, and a fellow labourer in the Quaker-Methodist Society.

UNDER SUSPICION.

Every account of Peter Phillips describes him as a teacher of true insight. Brilliant preaching he never attempted; nor had he any confidence in what was sentimental. Only once as far as we know did he announce a sermon beforehand, and the circumstance is too interesting to be left unmentioned. It was during the days following the massacre of Peterloo. Like most Lancashire towns Warrington had its band of insurgents, and the vigilance of the authorities was strained to the utmost. The Quaker Methodists, from their democratic tendencies, were under some suspicion. The suspicion seemed to be confirmed when Peter Phillips surprised the congregation at Friars Green by announcing that on the next Sunday evening he would preach from the text, "He that hath no sword let him sell his cloak and buy one." People gathered in crowds to hear the prophet of revolt, and the officers of the law took prominent places in the audience. The neighbours took the precaution to barricade their windows in anticipation of riot. But it was a needless precaution. The preacher calmly proceeded to show the spiritual significance of the text and to describe the mission of the true disciple in every age. The law officers left before the

sermon ended. Let us hope they had felt the keen edge of the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE.

In another incident we see him in the more characteristic aspect of a man of courage. Like many other good people he felt keenly the treatment meted out to Queen Caroline. That a king should set such an example was, as he saw it, contemptible, and condemnation was no less due because the offender was a king. But those were days when it involved some peril to speak ill of a monarch, and many who felt strongly were content to make discretion the better part of valour. A protest within meeting-house walls might have been enough, but it carried no message to those outside.

Peter Phillips was determined that the town should know that there were at least some who thought more of goodness than of royalty, and who professed no respect for a king who was not kingly enough to do right. No public building could be obtained for a meeting, and one could not be held in the streets. But a public protest there must be. The plan adopted was that of a procession. Meeting, by permission, in a field at Arpley, and led by Peter and Hannah Phillips, the procession moved through the town to find its way back to the field unmolested. It is a fine picture which shows us the men and women of Friars Green preferring the loss of favour and the risk of loss of a livelihood, preferring also to accept the anger of the authorities, rather than be false to conscience and to righteousness.

Peter Phillips passed away, May 11th, 1853, repeating among his last words the lines of Wesley :

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a helpless worm redeem ?
Jesus ! my only hope Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart,
Oh, could I catch one smile from Thee
And drop into eternity.



THE FIRST MEETING-HOUSE.



THE first meeting place of the Quaker-Methodists merits brief notice, if only on the ground of its many associations. The land purchased for its erection fronted upon St. Austin's Lane at a point quite close to the site of the ancient Friary from which Friars Green took its name. The first building was of small proportions. The land on all sides was used as a burial ground and received the bodies of many, if not all, of the preachers and members for more than half a century.

The building was twice enlarged, and to give further accommodation a gallery was added, which was approached by a flight of stone steps from outside. It was the scene in 1804 of a revival under the preaching of Dorothy Ripley, the American Quakeress, and two years later of a still more remarkable movement under Lorenzo Dow. No less influential were the meetings held from 1830 onwards, during the total abstinence agitation.

The historic building disappeared in 1859 to give place to the present building.

No part of the structure remains, though the low wall and original iron fence still marks the boundary on the St. Austin's Lane side. A more interesting relic is the horse-mount, a piece of sandstone similar to those commonly provided a century ago, which stands directly opposite, but upon the other side of the narrow street. The mount was the open-air pulpit from which many preachers and total abstinence advocates have spoken. Tradition associates with the stone pulpit the names of the preacheresses Dorothy Ripley and Anna Richardson. A tradition, well asserted, associates it also with Lorenzo Dow, and gives at the same time a glimpse of the rich days of a century ago. On a Sunday morning during the great revival, Anna Richardson was making her way in the grey dawn, intending to spend the first few hours of the day in solitary intercession in the Chapel. She reached the gate

to find that someone had arrived before her. Lorenzo Dow, with head bowed Elijah-like between his knees, was sitting upon the cold steps of the horse-mount in an agony of intercession.

The old gateway is left to us, and imagination may conjure up the long lineage of good men who have passed and repassed in their advocacy of great causes : the Quaker-Methodists standing firmly by an unpopular cause, but living to find themselves an honoured community ; Dorothy Ripley and Lorenzo Dow bringing from across the Atlantic




OLD FRIARS GREEN.

great and strange gifts of ministry ; James Crawfoot, for the offence of preaching here suspended by the Wesleyan Methodists, and becoming thenceforward a force in the shaping of Primitive Methodism ; Hugh Bourne and William Clowes bringing the zeal which afterwards built the denomination ; George Harrison Birkett, the pioneer of total abstinence, and Joseph Livesey, its most ardent apostle ; Henry Anderton, Dr. Grinrod, James Teare, Edward Grubb, presenting the pathos as well as the science and logic of the temperance cause.

We may well be proud of the associations of the old meeting-house, for these names are cherished to-day as representing the best influences that have shaped modern thought and habit.

THE REVIVAL OF 1806 AND ITS RESULTS.

EVERAL Churches still exist which are the result of the Revival of 1806 and the preaching of Lorenzo Dow. The American had found at Friars Green a people fully prepared for his ministrations. Coming as a stranger to Liverpool he had been discovered by Peter Phillips and invited to come to Warrington. At the first meeting he sounded the keynote of revival and called upon his hearers to enter upon a covenant of prayer. Lorenzo was an evangelist of singular power. His strange personality and vivid eloquence never failed to leave a deep impress. At Warrington he found a congenial sphere. The Church was a comparatively small one, but it had a missionary atmosphere. For many miles around the news of the revival spread. When the Chapel was found too small the preacher took the stone horse-mount for a pulpit and spoke to the multitude that crowded the burying-ground. Nor were the services restricted to Friars Green. With Peter Phillips as guide Lorenzo visited the preaching-houses in Cheshire, and preached to wayside congregations everywhere. Two Churches remain to us as a direct result of the preaching of Lorenzo Dow Stockton Heath and Risley. Both have had an interesting history and deserve fuller mention than can be given here.

STOCKTON HEATH.

Returning from a preaching expedition in Cheshire, Lorenzo -always eccentric- took a whim that he would like to preach in a certain wayside barn. The building stood near to the highway and he arrested the steps of his colleagues to point it out. For the following Sunday permission was gained and services were arranged. Those who assembled to hear the American preacher would

probably have been incredulous if told that the services would be held there for twenty-two years without a break. Such, however, was the record, and the Church only moved from the barn to enter its newly-built Chapel in 1828.

The incident of the Stockton Heath barn was typical of Lorenzo Dow. He sowed beside all waters and reaped



Photo]

STOCKTON HEATH.

[J. Cartwright.

many harvests, but he left others to gather and bind. His genius was that of Whitefield rather than Wesley: he was an evangelist, but not an organizer. It was due to Peter and Joshua Phillips that the results of his labours at Stockton Heath were gathered. For many years the two brothers walked to Stockton Heath to maintain a Sunday

school in the barn and to preach at the services. There has been preserved to us in manuscript form an account of the beginnings of the barn Sunday School. It was written by William Phillips, the eldest son of Peter Phillips.

I was present at the opening, and well remember the circumstance. It was a very humble beginning. The barn was cleaned out for the purpose, some little repairs done to the walls and windows, a pair of new doors put up. The seats were composed of a few planks, there were only a very few books; a large sheet was posted behind the door, on which was printed the alphabet and my father surrounded by a group of boys, pointed to, with a stick, the letters. . . . Amongst that group of boys, I may just mention, one or two became preachers—one especially, who is now living in Liverpool, became very useful. I refer to D. B. . . . After the morning lessons were over, those of the children who came from a great distance, eat the dinner they brought with them, after which all who were willing assembled together to practise singing, which they took delight in, and this was the practice for years. My father used to draw a stave upon the door and teach them the elements of music; he was remarkably kind and attaché with them and became a great favourite. Oh these simple happy days when the preachers were to the secular their care as fathers and they as children. would to God they would come again.

The barn services owed much of their influence to Thomas Eaton, who came to reside at Stockton Heath as the local manager of the Bridgewater Canal. That Stockton Heath, a small village, should have attained such importance and secured such frequent mention in the journals of notable men would be a puzzle indeed did we not know something of this good man's home. William Clowes, one of the founders of Primitive Methodism, called it a veritable "pilgrims' inn." Its doors were ever wide open to men who sought the good of others. Dorothy Ripley, the Quakeress, and Lorenzo Dow were entertained there. Hugh Bourne found help and consolation on many occasions, and eulogy of Thomas Eaton and his good wife comes often in his journals. The house in which he lived, though somewhat altered, still remains to us. To Thomas Eaton, Stockton Heath owes the most important event in its history—the formation of the first total abstinence society. "Providence Chapel"—so called because of the chain of circumstances which made possible its erection—had been opened in 1828, and it was to this building that the temperance advocates were invited when all other doors were closed. The barn disappeared some years ago, but "Providence Chapel," used as the Sunday school, remains. A new and commodious building, erected in the village in 1901, is now the home of the Church.

RISLEY.

Several times in his journal of 1806 Lorenzo Dow speaks of holding meetings at Risley. His wayside sermons called together a people who drank in eagerly of his teachings, and soon a small meeting was formed of those who came to be called the "Dowites." In later years the meeting was held in the house of J. Speakman, but we are not sure that this was its first meeting-place. In point of its denominational



RISLEY CHAPEL.

ties Risley has had a curious history. It was at first recorded as a meeting under the care at Friars Green, and as such received a visit from Hugh Bourne in June, 1808. The pioneer of Primitive Methodism became deeply attached to the "Dowites." Probably they were a people after his own heart, for all accounts have described them as a people of unusual warmth of religious feeling. The tie between them strengthened with repeated visits and in 1809, when Bourne prepared a preaching plan, Risley appeared as a Lancashire outpost. This has led to the supposition that Risley was one of the earliest Churches of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. But Warrington and Stockton

Heath appear also, and it is clear that the arrangement was made purely to secure and mark his periodic visits to the Quaker-Methodists. Hugh Bourne has several mentions of visits to Risley. In 1808 he names John Webb as the class leader, and Thomas Knight as a preacher. Under the date Saturday, April 22nd, 1809, he says :—

“ In the afternoon went with John Webb to Risley : the people have been much persecuted by professors and profane. They had a meeting at night and it was a very powerful time : I was near falling to the floor.

“ Sunday, April 23rd. We had a meeting at Risley : an exceedingly powerful time. I received new light on the ministry. Here each one does that which is right in his own eyes. They stand, sit, kneel, pray, exhort, etc., as they are moved. I was very fond of this way. On my way to Warrington another fold of power spread over my soul.”

Clearly Hugh Bourne was enamoured of Quaker-Methodism as he found it at Risley and he seems to have lost no opportunity of visiting the Church. Scarcely so William Clowes, who says of the same meeting : “ We went down to Risley and found a people very singular in their notions and manner of worship, *which we did not at all admire*, nevertheless the Lord made us very useful among them.” In October of the same year Hugh Bourne describes another visit as “ one of the best times I ever had.” Yet again in November he was with them and mentions being at the home of William Dickenson. So also through the following years. Hugh Bourne, James Crawfoot and William Clowes often seem to have preached at Risley, and, Hugh Bourne especially seems to have given unstinted help.

After meeting for many years in the home, the members in 1848 erected a meeting house. Hugh Bourne was spared to preach the first sermon within its walls from the text “ These shall walk with me in white for they are worthy.” The present building dates from 1869.



AN INCIDENT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF 1808.



THE earliest printed minutes which have come down to us are those of the Annual Meeting of 1808. Although it was usual at that period to give the outlines of the sermons that were preached and to supply a number of interesting facts we are left with only a very incomplete idea of what the meetings were really like. However carefully drafted, "minutes" can seldom be made to reveal the tone of a meeting, and nothing short of a verbatim report would enable us to gauge the intelligence of those composing it.

We know little of this first recorded Annual Meeting. It is good, therefore, to discover that among the visitors was a man capable of forming a very shrewd judgment. Hugh Bourne had just begun the series of noble efforts which resulted in the formation of Primitive Methodism. He had made the acquaintance of the Quaker-Methodists during the holding of the first famous Camp Meeting on Mow Cop, and had recorded with gratitude that though Warrington was forty miles distant they had travelled on foot to take part in the preaching of that memorable day. He met them also on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of 1807, held at Macclesfield in the summer of that year, and accepted an invitation to preach at Warrington and Risley.

The following year the meeting was again held in Macclesfield and on Sunday, June 12th, he was there by appointment to preach. He remained through the meeting and says "I had a good time with them."

In another entry in his journal he tells us that Dr. Paul Johnson, of Dublin, the friend of Lorenzo Dow and Peter Phillips, was present and remarks: "I spent some time on Monday with Dr. Johnson; he earnestly tried to convert me to Quakerism, but could not succeed."

Much controversy seems to have been waged about that period upon the subject of ministry of women, and Hugh Bourne tells us that the subject received consideration by the meeting. To certain questions which were propounded he agreed to draw up an answer. A week later he was at Warrington, whither he had felt moved to go, and at the home of Peter Phillips wrote his leaflet on "The Ministry of Women." He writes in his journal, June 21st, 1808, "When I had gone through with it I showed it to Peter Phillips, and he requested that I would let him print it. I replied that it wanted correcting, so I corrected and enlarged it."

The argument of Hugh Bourne's pamphlet is by no



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THE HOME OF PETER PHILLIPS, SHIP YARD, WARRINGTON.

means out of date. After showing that the term prophet was used to describe David's singers and musicians, and used by Paul to describe a heathen poet, he passes to the question, "Is the preaching of women authorised by Jesus Christ?" This is part of the answer:—

Well, besides the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth, you have Anna, the prophetess, who testified of Jesus in the Temple, and thus I take to be strong preaching. Well, but you say Whom did He authorise personally? Answer: The woman of Samaria—I believe she was commissioned by the Holy Ghost to preach Jesus, and she did preach with extraordinary success, and He authorised her ministry, for He joined in with it, and acted accordingly. Then you have Mary Magdalene. She was commissioned by an angel to preach, and then by

Jesus Christ Himself. It is said of Paul in one place that he preached Jesus and the resurrection. So did Mary to the apostles themselves. Thus our Lord ordained her an apostle to the apostles, a preacher to the preachers, and an evangelist to the evangelists.

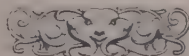
Was woman ministry countenanced by any of the Apostles? Answer: Philip, the evangelist, had four daughters that prophesied—preached. Aquilla and Priscilla took Apollos, and expounded to him the way of God. Paul says "Help those women who laboured with me in the Gospel." He also says "Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered," &c. This is rather decisive. He here lays down rules and regulations for this very thing—and even if any woman who prayed or prophesied would not submit to rule, he does not say let her be stopped but let her be shorn."

Hugh Bourne and his colleagues worked for many years in close association with the Quaker-Methodists. Indeed, at one period, it seemed almost certain that he would join himself to them. In his journal we get repeated glimpses of Peter Phillips and his friends. Perhaps the most interesting is one which reveals a round-table conference held at his house. There were present Hugh Bourne, Dr. Paul Johnson, Peter Phillips and a Mr. Sigston. Of this meeting H. B. Kendall says:—

This member of the group (Mr. Sigston we judge to have been the Methodist schoolmaster of Leeds, the friend and biographer of Bramwell, and the leading spirit in the troubles arising out of the organ case, which led, in 1828, to the formation of the Protestant Methodists. If our surmise be correct this little gathering was a notable one. Its purpose was to consider what means should be adopted in order to carry on and extend the revival begun by Lorenzo Dow, Dr. Johnson and the Camp Meetings. The outcome of the Conference was a book. It was resolved to print and circulate as largely as possible the life of Benjamin Abbot, the American Evangelist.

In connection with the project Hugh Bourne made a journey on foot to Leeds, which he describes in some interesting paragraphs.

The lives of Peter Phillips and Hugh Bourne covered the same period. Both were born in the seventies of the eighteenth century and both passed away the same year. Though the adoption of an itinerant ministry in the Primitive Methodist Church lessened the co-operation of the early years, it is pleasant to know that the close and sympathetic friendship which began in 1807 was maintained to the end.



OUR OLDEST MEETING.



WHATEVER honour may be due to the oldest meeting must be paid to the modest cause at High Legh. This most remote, and in some respects, most interesting of Churches, has met continuously since 1783.

Perhaps no existing meeting of any denomination so effectually joins us with early Methodism or so charmingly reminds us of its first meetings.

It came into existence as the direct result of John Wesley's preaching, and for a time was a preaching station of his preachers. Various entries in Wesley's journal tell of his journeys through the heart of Cheshire. Commencing January 25, 1746, he paid a succession of visits to the home of John and Alice Cross, of Boothbank, and in their home one of the earliest Methodist societies was formed. There came to light, not long ago, a manuscript which adds to the scanty reference of the journal. It is a record prepared by a loving hand of the texts from which Wesley preached, and some details of the work. The members of the Boothbank meeting, in addition to John and Alice Cross, are given in a note.

Members of Boothbank were Faithful Street, Robert Southern, Richard Baxter and Betty Okell.

He proceeds to say

Preaching began at Betty Okell's, August or September, 1783.

The home of the Okells was at Northwood, High Legh, and the preaching was held in the farm dairy. Doubtless the distance between the house at Northwood and that at Boothbank, joined with a desire to reach others, led to the division of the meeting. Whether Wesley himself preached at Betty Okell's we do not know. Probably he did not, yet the meeting is associated with one whose name will be as indelibly associated with the nineteenth century as Wesley's was with the eighteenth. It was at High Legh that Robert Moffat was converted and filled with the impulse

he should choose the modest dairy meeting in preference to the services of Establishment was a source of surprise.

ROBERT MOFFAT WHEN AT
HIGH LEGE.

had scarcely more than responded to the first call of Christ than there came the strong impulse to active service. Clear and vivid there came the call to foreign missions. He was never tired of telling the story of that first call, and of the many other incidents of his life which stood out as clearly as the things of yesterday. He had started to work in Washington, and had been

“It was on a calm, beautiful summer evening. All nature seemed to be at rest, and I felt as if I were in a new world, and the bright pictures painted on the clouds and on the earth and back in past ages, pictures of future comfort and advancement and usefulness.

"Lester and I began this one in the morning. I had been planning to return. I didn't get a chance either—had to go to work. I was a doctor, and that's what he thought the best thing to do. But at least he started his own steps."

With thoughts like these I entered the town, and, passing over a bridge, I saw on a hillside a small white building, which I had never seen before.

went to the darkness and to rest and neglected therapy. But Murphy was doing better, something he never felt before, and knew without the aid of drugs. The desire to live had returned, he knew. He had suffered for some time before offered for treatment under the promise of the doctors. In the darkness of his life, nothing he passed through the vicissitudes of his life. With his mind he found himself, and the work of the spirit, and made his first attempt at recovery. But the physician in the evening was not of any assistance. He

placard, the first I had seen in my life. It was announced that a missionary meeting was to be held, and a William Roby, of Manchester, would take the chair. I stood some time reading over and over again, although I found that the time the meeting was to be held was past. Passers-by must have wondered at my fixedness. I could look at nothing but the words on the placard, which I can still imagine I see before me. The stories of the Moravian Missionaries in Greenland and Labrador, which I had heard my mother read when I was a boy, came into vivid remembrance as if fresh from her lips. It is impossible for me to describe the tumult which took hold of my mind.

"I hastened to obtain the trifle I wanted in town, and returned to the placard and read it over once more, and now wended my solitary way homeward another man, or rather with another heart. The earthly prospects I had so lately been thinking of with pleasure had entirely vanished, nor could any power of mind recall their influence. My thoughts became entirely occupied with the inquiry, how I could serve the missionary cause."

Moffat never forgot the incidents of the years spent at High Legh. In 1871, when in England, he made a journey to Cheshire to seek out the house in which he had received his deepest religious impressions. Standing on the flags of the milk-house, with tears coursing down his cheeks, he said "It was here the Lord revealed Himself to my soul five and fifty years ago."

The house of Betty Okell was removed some years ago, but the meeting continues in the dairy of a more modern house quite close to the site. Save for a short interval the service has been held in the house of the Okells from 1783 to the present day. The movable pulpit from which Moffat preached is still in use, and those who care to visit the grounds of High Legh Hall may still see the tiny dwelling place scarcely changed since the day when Robert Moffat as a youth of eighteen found the Bible lighted up with new meanings, and learned the will of God to men. Dr. Parker was fond of saying: "The man that won Robert Moffat won a continent." This is scarcely an exaggeration, for Moffat was the chief helper of David Livingstone and a host of others whose labours have opened the Dark Continent. For those who are called to labour in obscure places there is no story more inspiring than that of Robert Moffat, and the quiet meeting place in which he found the light.



THE TOTAL ABSTINENCE MOVEMENT.



THE phrase, "Seven Men of Preston," has passed into current speech. Popular tradition has made "the seven" both the authors and pioneers of the campaign against intoxicants, and invested them with peculiar honour.

It came therefore as a rude shock in September 1892 when our best informed temperance historian, Dr. Dawson Burns, declared the story of the seven men of Preston to be mere tradition and the greater part of it "pure nonsense." In proof of his statement he quotes the account left by John King, one of the seven, who declares that two of the seven "recanted before we left for home that night," and that another "left the society." The conclusion reached by Dr. Dawson Burns is briefly:—

"That several temperance societies on the basis of total abstinence had been formed prior to September, 1892, that the principal promoters of total abstinence in Preston and elsewhere, subsequent to September 1st, 1892, were not any of the 'Seven.' Mr. Laseby, excepted though, there were consistent and useful advocates."

The facts of the origin of the modern Total Abstinence Movement, though long hidden, may now be taken as clearly established. First among the pioneer advocates was Basil Montagu, who, in 1804, made a plea that the Society of Friends would take up the abstinence and practice of abstinence. This was followed in 1811 by Joseph Brotherton's appeal to the Quaker Conventions for "entire abstinence."

As early as 1820 temperance societies were formed in America and fugitive pamphlets describing them found their way to appreciative hands in Europe.

The first society in Europe was formed in Scotland in

Ireland by Jeffery Sedwards. Societies followed in Belfast, Greenock, Glasgow and Bradford, based on the American pledge, which forbade spirits only.

Our interest centres in the query : To whom do we owe the modern campaign against alcohol in all its forms, and who first asked men to join themselves in a society to do battle with it ? The honour unquestionably belongs to members of the Society of Friends, chiefly to George Harrison Birkett, of Dublin. George Harrison Birkett had long been known in his own city as an advocate of pure habit. He was a vegetarian at a time when vegetarianism



OLD STOCKTON HEATH CHAPEL.

was far from common, and became the first teetotaller of Dublin and founder of the National Temperance Society of Ireland. Visiting Warrington with William Wood upon the business of the Society of Friends, he issued his first public plea for total abstinence in the form of a manifesto. After many years of obscurity a reprint of this pamphlet has been discovered and proves to be of great interest. The strength of the prejudice against the new idea may be judged from the fact that no meeting place for its advocacy could be procured. Disappointed in Warrington the two Quakers were introduced to Thomas Eaton, a leading member of our meeting at Stockton Heath.

The use of Providence Chapel was promised, and after due announcement the meeting was held on April 4th, 1830. At its close a society was formed, based upon the total abstinence pledge contained in the manifesto. This was unquestionably the first English Society of Total Abstinence, and its formation marks the beginning of the modern movement.

From Warrington the two advocates passed to Manchester and proceeded to form a society there. To this society, or at least to one of its numerous branches, Joseph Livesey owed his knowledge of the total abstinence propaganda. He was at that time editor of the "Moral Reformer," and stated in an editorial note that 3,000 persons had joined the movement. "I attended a meeting in Angel Meadow and was much pleased to see the spirit and hear the hearty declarations of the temperance disciples. . . . Branch associations are rising up in every surrounding village." This was in December, 1831. In August of the following year he took the pledge and began the famous Preston movement, which has made his name famous through the English-speaking world.

From the roll-book of the Stockton Heath Society it is clear that the first society was almost entirely composed of the members of our Church.

Though sharing at first the general prejudice the Quaker-Methodists of Warrington soon realized the value of the movement. The old Friars Green Chapel became the "Cock-pit of South Lancashire," and was not second to the cock-pit of Preston in the influences which radiated from it. Speaking of it in his memoir of Henry Andert n. Edward Grubb says, "Next to the cock-pit at Preston the old Friars Green Chapel deserves to be associated with his name as one of the places where he displayed that mighty eloquence that touched all hearts and filled every eye." Those were stirring days. The building was the only one for miles around in which temperance meetings could be held, and in view of the scenes which occurred it is small wonder that others were not offered. Infuriated dupes, hired by publicans to disturb the meetings, handed round jugs and even buckets of liquor to show contempt for the speakers. Men of rare metal those orators must have been to quell such disturbers and win them to total abstinence, in spite of the bribes of their employers.

Friars Green and total abstinence became closely associated in the popular mind. No consideration of comfort could induce them to close the building. It was

open free of charge for many years to every comer who had a word to say that might induce men towards sobriety. Joseph Livesey, Dr. Grindrod, Richard Horne, Edward Grubb, James Teare, Henry Anderton, and a long list of the early worthies came to look upon it as the recognised centre for their efforts.

Nowhere else did the controversy battle rage so fiercely as in South Lancashire : and it is not too much to claim that it was within the walls of the old Chapel more than at any other place that the victory for temperance was gained. It must be recorded to the great honour of our fathers that they were first to make sacrifices in the cause of temperance, and that through all the stress of the early conflicts they stood firmly by the cause they had espoused.

Yet another temperance honour belongs to them. In the Sunday school at Brick Street, what was perhaps the first Total Abstinence Society for young people—Band of Hope we should now call it—was formed. The school at Brick Street had been formed by Peter Phillips, who in returning from a preaching appointment had been deeply impressed by the appearance of the ragged children in the streets.

Both in Preston, Manchester and America youths' temperance societies had been formed in 1834. The Preston Society, formed April 18th, was the first in that town to adopt a pledge which meant abstinence from malt liquors. Even this society—curious as it may now seem to us—only bound the signator to abstain for one year. It remained for the Warrington Society on May 1st, 1835, to establish "The Youths' Total Abstinence Society" upon a basis of entire abstinence. Its first secretary was James Gandy, whose name afterwards became widely known among our Churches. His father was Thomas Gandy, a Methodist, whose privilege it had been to share the friendship of John Wesley, and whose door-step in the Market Place had served more than once as a pulpit for the great preacher.

Other members of the society, whose names will be familiar to many, were George Mee, James Brimelow, William Hudson, Thomas Shaw, and Joseph Mounfield. The work among the young, though less noticed, was no less useful than the work among adults, and leavened many minds which were afterwards active and zealous in the cause.

Old Friars Green Chapel and Brick Street Sunday School have disappeared, but the meeting house at Stockton Heath remains scarcely changed since the historic meeting of three quarters of a century ago.

A DEFENCE OF INDEPENDENT METHODISM.

AN ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES IN 1815.



By the instruction of the Annual Meeting in 1815, the subjoined address was issued to the Churches, signed by Peter Ashley, President, and W. Massey, Secretary. We quote the address, as it puts tersely some of the objections to our Church polity urged then and now, and answers to them. The addressed congregation, but have gained much emphasis by the passage of many years.

It is our dearer pleasure that, after the lapse of many years, and the production of many of our members, that we should all now come to realize, that we have to witness and as the subject of *Justification* and *Indignity* that demand our most sacred and reverent attention, we enjoy the greatest of early attainments, peace and prosperity in all our Churches.

That God is working a revolution from the efforts that are produced, for many of our people are becoming sensible for peace and justice, and the great Lord of the Vineyard has raised many useful ministers, men of talent and ability, who are both able and willing to administer the Word of Life, various talents and gifts of grace, men whose labours are, we have reason to trust, all owned of God, by great numbers being brought out of darkness into glorious light. In some places, some members around the preaching of the Word that we have need to try out for more room, that our usefulness may be the more extended, and that we may be the means of spreading *Finis* and *Agostic* truths far and wide. We are convinced there is an open door before us, and that these truths revealed among us will bear down the aged infidelity and oppression before them, and will be carried at some future day to earth's remotest bound.

"From the diversity of opinion that prevails in the kingdom concerning us, we think it necessary at this time briefly to state to the world what we mean by those peculiarities (so called) which are found amongst us. The first is that our preachers receive no salaries for preaching. Though it may appear strange at the present day, yet we consider it to be truly Apostolic and primitive, calculated to produce the best effects, for in the first place we have the example of Christ and His Apostles, who, according to the declaration of St. Paul, ministered both to their own necessities and also to those who were with them.

"Again we are fully persuaded that the money expended in support of hired ministers throughout the kingdom might be employed to more useful purposes. We think if the money paid in this kingdom to such men were divided into two parts, and one half of it appropriated for the use of the poor, the helpless, the fatherless, and the widow, and the other part employed in sending missionaries abroad, England might extend its labours and be the means of spreading the Gospel from sea to sea and from shore to shore. Upon this plan men can have no motive to induce them to become preachers, but that they may present every man before God without spot or blemish. Besides, the great argument of Infidelity, that men would cease to preach if their salaries were taken from them, is completely answered.

"Again, the present state of things in England are so widely different from what they once were, that there is not the same necessity for men to be set apart for the ministry as when our countrymen were the subjects of ignorance and superstition, when the number of teachers was few, and when they were obliged to travel a great way to promulgate the Gospel. At present, things are very different, as there is hardly a town or a village in Britain but they have preachers residing amongst them, who preach the Gospel and labour with their hands for the bread that perisheth, and whose preaching is both useful and acceptable to their brethren.

"After all, we have no objection to others doing as they think best in employing hired ministers, but we consider our own plan as the bulwark of our liberty; for we acknowledge but one Master, even Christ, and we are all brethren in Him.

"The name of our Society as *Independent Methodist* appears to have been misunderstood. The word *Independent* amongst us signifies no more than that each Church has

the sole privilege of making its internal laws, independent of any canon laws, or of any conference, or any other Church whatever of the same persuasion. The sole reason for our assembling together once a year as Synods is that the real state of each Church may be inquired into, and that they may be assisted if occasion requires: that ministers may on proper occasions pay friendly visits to the Churches: and that if anything can be suggested for the good of the whole, well: but yet every Church is left to its own discretion, for none can say to another, 'Why dost thou so?'

"It has been said that as our ministers preach without salaries we have no need of money. This is a gross mistake. If we have no money, how are our chapels to be built, our poor relieved and incidental expenses paid? But whatever it may cost us we have the pleasure and satisfaction that we know our money is expended in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and in spreading the glorious Kingdom of the greatest and best of Beings.

"Now, brethren, we leave you to the care of that God whose eyes are ever watchful over the righteous, and whose ears are open to their prayers, and Who has said: 'I am with you even to the end of the world.'"

OUR ANNUAL ASSEMBLY.

ITS DEVELOPMENT.



OUR Churches have ever held to the independence of the Churches—that each was a self-governed community of believers. Indeed, many have come into existence to assert the principle. It is, therefore, not surprising that a Union of Independent Methodist Churches did not come into being for several years after they had been established. The first Annual Meeting was held in 1806, but records only date from 1808, when at the Annual Meeting, held at Macclesfield, 16 Churches were represented, with a membership of 1,199. For many years there was no attempt at organisation. The Church receiving the Annual Meeting made the arrangements, as is the custom still, and officers were elected when the meeting was constituted. The representatives held religious services and gave consideration to reports from the Churches, which were often in themselves brief sermons. To use the old Methodist phrase, “they had a good time,” and no doubt went back to their Churches blessed and encouraged. Of hearing sermons our forefathers were never tired. On the Saturday evening the religious meetings began, to resume sometimes at five, six or seven o'clock next morning. At Bolton in 1834, for instance, there was on the Sunday—a sermon at seven o'clock; from ten to twelve, two sermons; lovefeast in the afternoon, and two sermons in the evening. This was followed by preaching on Monday morning and evening and also on Tuesday morning. Whilst services were being held in the Chapel, the Welsh brethren spoke to those of their Principality in the “School-house.”

SACRIFICE OF HOLIDAYS.

The first meetings were held at Whitsuntide and then for some years at Easter, reverting back in 1835 to Whitsuntide, until it was decided in 1864 to meet on the third

ANNUAL MEETING



Photo by

W. Widdup, I. Holmes, J. I.
 S. Dewhurst, W. Boone, N. Seeker, W. South, J. Vickers,
 H. Jackson, T. Haigh, J. Wild, W. Hardman, J. Barron, J. Day,
 R. Eatock, T. Foulds, J. Higson, J. Clough, T. Coward, I. Doherty,
 J. Halliday, H. Whitmore, P. Fearnley, J. Brown, T. Worthington, W. I.
 J. Tessiman, R. Ratcliffe, M. Mullineux, T. Cooke, J. Sheldon,
 S. Cawley, A. Densham

ING AT COLNE, 1874.



[J. Wilkinson & Co., Colne.

ess. T. Wilmore. J. Hall.
 Makin. R. Spencer. J. Settle. G. Ward. M. Kennedy. R. Foulds.
 Howarth. N. Edmundson. T. Adshead. H. Robertshaw. J. Holt. T. J. Baillie.
 Barrow. T. Backhouse. W. Lyon. R. Pinder. R. McNaught. J. Hesford. C. Fildes.
 ow. J. Isterling. W. Wright. J. Proe. W. Fazackerley. T. Handley. J. Hudlass.
 nowles. W. Oxley. G. Winterburn. J. Firth. T. Lush. T. Lister. T. Stow.
 W. Sanderson.

Saturday in June, and continue until the following Tuesday. This latter arrangement has been adhered to, with a little deviation when the Whitsuntide holidays have interfered. Originally the holiday period was agreed upon because most of the representatives, being working men or those engaged in business, could only meet at such seasons, and they willingly gave up their holiday for the Churches' welfare.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE.

Ultimately circumstances compelled some form of

organisation. It was entered upon very slowly. They were free men and jealous of any abridgement of liberty of action. First, in 1833 the President and Secretary were appointed to continue in office from one Annual Meeting until the next. In 1846 the President was appointed to arbitrate in any disputes referred to him during his term of office, and five years later (1851) five members were appointed to act with the President and Secretary as a Connexional



ALEXANDER DENOVAN.
1794—1878.

Committee, to transact business in the intervals of the Annual Meetings. As the need was felt new officers were elected. It is, however, significant that the Connexion had attained its jubilee before a treasurer was appointed, the first to fill that position being James Firth, of Oldham. In that year—1859—a voluntary Contingent Fund was established. Evidently there had been little money to deal with, and the Meeting, as far as one can judge, was chary at asking for it. The Connexional Committee was also at intervals enlarged and made representative of the Circuits, until the present arrangement was reached:—President,

ex-President. Secretary. Assistant Secretary. Treasurer. Editor. Evangelistic Secretary. Bookroom Secretary. Ministers' Assistance Fund Secretary. Christian Endeavour Secretary. Temperance Secretary. Finance Secretary. Auditor, and 15 representatives of the following districts :— Manchester. Warrington. Oldham. Bolton. Wigan. Liverpool. Emley and Baildon Green. Colne and Nelson. Northern Counties. Bristol and South Wales. This Committee divides itself into sections, comprising the Evangelistic, Visiting, Christian Endeavour, Temperance, Foreign Mission, Finance, Bookroom, Ministers' Assistance Fund, and Ministers' Education, who all report to the General Committee, and whose proceedings are subject to the approval of the Annual Meeting.

FIXING NAME OF DENOMINATION.

Fixing a name for our denomination has been a difficulty and a hindrance. Whilst the majority of the Churches have always had the name of Independent Methodist they were willing to join with Churches with the same principles but having different local designations. Our Churches have ever cared more for reality than symbol and so the majority yielded to others that there should be a general descriptive title for the Churches represented at the Annual Assembly. In 1833 Alexander Denovan, of Glasgow, became President of the Connexion, and we see his hand in the following, which prefaced the minutes of the succeeding years.

The Ministry to which we adhere is like that of the first Christians. Believing that the Church has within itself all that is necessary for making "increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love," and that God still gives "gifts to men" for such a glorious purpose—to qualify them for the conviction and conversion of sinners, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"—believing these things, we require all among us to add to their "faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge," &c., and when they receive "the gift," while subject to their brethren, to "minister the same one to another" (Ephes. iv. 11-16. Rom. xii. 6-8. 1st Cor. xiv. 1-3, 24; 1st Peter, iv. 10, 11. Missionaries sent forth by us, having their whole time occupied in travelling preaching, &c., like the Apostles and Evangelists originally commissioned by our Lord, have liberty to "live of the Gospel," 1st Cor. ix. 1-14, compared with Matt. x. 1-14, and Luke x. 1-8). But all other Ministers maintain themselves and their families, according to the instructions given by Paul to Bishops in Acts xx. 33-35, and in 1st Thel. i. 1 read with ver. 17-19 of chap. iii, and ver. 2 of chap. iv.*—unless through affliction, or old age, they are unable to do so. In such circumstances of distress "food and raiment" are communicated to them according

* See also 2nd Thes. iii. 6-15; 2nd Tim. ii. 2, Acts xx. 28-31; Tit. i. 10, 11.



JOHN KNOWLES.
1818—1889.

to the ability of the Churches of whom they have the oversight, agreeably to the following scripture, namely:—"Let the Elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (1st Tim. v. 17)—"honour" signifying relief, and relief implying that the person who requires it is in need: (Compare 1st Tim. v. 3 with v. 16. See also Gal. vi. 6, which compare with Heb. xiii. 16 and Philip. iv. 15—18.)

It was in this year agreed to style the Union "The United Churches of Christ," each Church to retain its own

name of Independent Methodist, Quaker Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist Reformers, &c. This title was undisturbed for ten years, although the title page of the minutes would show sometimes that the assembly had been held at an Independent Methodist Church. In 1841, William Sanderson, of Liverpool, first appeared at the Annual Assembly, and with his advent may be linked a resolution, passed at Warrington in 1843.

"That to give an identity to our Annual Meeting and as much as possible show what we are, without any Church being required to alter its own designation, we have upon the page of the title page of our Minutes: 'Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Delegates from the United Free Gospel Churches, and that the title page of the Magazine be in accordance therewith likewise.'

A number of Churches individually adopted the title of "Free Gospel Churches," but the Independent Methodists, the most thriving section, were never satisfied with the departure from the original name. They wished to associate themselves with the great Methodist family in name as well as spirit, and as years sped on the anomaly of having different local names was more clearly seen. At last, in 1848, by a unanimous vote, to a great extent secured by a pamphlet written by William Brimebow, the Annual

Meeting resumed its name of Independent Methodist and the Churches undertook to preface their local names with this title, if they retained them. As a section of the Methodist Church we have been represented at the Methodist Ecumenical Conferences, and have representatives on the Methodist Concerted Action Committee. The Methodist union movement has our sympathy, but it is recognized as hopeless to expect a reunion on our lines. We therefore favour a federal and not an organic union of the great Methodist family.

MODEL DEED.

Another unifying force originated in 1853, when William Sanderson moved and James Seddon seconded: "That the Testimony and Principles of Union be adopted." This is an exposition of the "Sentiments" previously quoted, and was prepared by Alexander Denovan. As was to be expected there was some difficulty over this doctrinal declaration. Churches looked askance at it, afraid of independence of thought and action being interfered with. Twelve Churches seceded, chiefly in the Warrington district, to meet separately each year until in 1860, at Manchester, John Knowles, acting as intermediary, a reconciliation took place, and the Annual Assembly generously restored the Churches to their old positions in the list.

It was not enough to define the doctrinal position of our Churches. If property were built with the intention that these views should be propagated it was necessary to secure this by deed. As early as 1824 this was seen, and three Manchester friends had a "Deed of Settlement for Independent Methodist Chapels" prepared. It was approved by the Annual Meeting



JAMES SEDDON.
1817—1879.

and lodged in the hands of the Manchester friends. It served as a model for some Churches, but great looseness prevailed, and nothing could be done until a general desire was shown for a more effective system. A form of Model Deed appeared in the Magazine for December, 1850, which the Annual Meeting the succeeding year approved, and commended to the Churches. This Deed, without interfering with the internal government of the Churches, secured the property to Independent Methodism. Since then the matter has received much attention, and a form of deed, further improved and modernised, was enrolled in Chancery in 1854, which makes the trust deeds modelled upon it much simpler and less expensive, in addition to forging the bond of union more strongly. It was the lack of such a bond for the first half of our existence as a Connexion that led to so many losses.

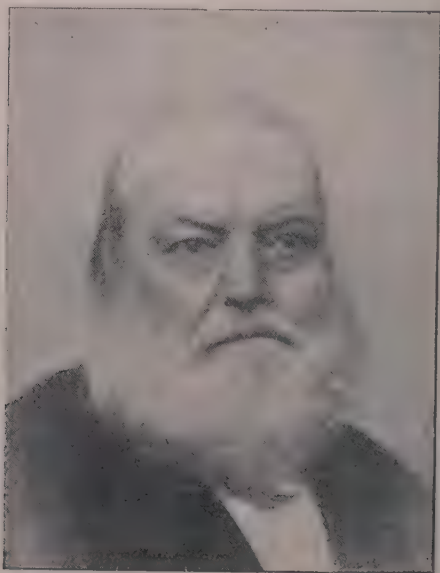
NEW MEN, NEW METHODS.

Some 40 years ago a policy was developed, and it has never weakened since, that whilst Churches should be steadfast to their independence they should also loyally show the spirit of mutual helpfulness and sustained effort. In the early sixties new men appeared in the Annual Meeting. They had been cradled in Independent Methodism and grown to manhood with full belief in its principles and future. Fortunately they combined with evangelistic zeal business capacity and knowledge of Church organisation. Standing Orders were arranged and the questions for the Annual Meeting business framed. Business method was introduced and as affairs have multiplied the principle of devolution has prevented the necessity of the Annual Meeting sitting for more than two days for business. Along with William Oxley came James Vickers (who unfortunately met with a railway accident which led to his premature death) and two or three years later William Brimelow, Robert Entwistle, James Price and William Crumblinhuime. There were also Edward Tress, James Gandy, Jeremiah Halliday and John Knowles, who had considerable influence, which they used at this period most effectively for progress.

Some of these men enjoyed the friendship of Samuel Fitzgerald, of Lancaster, a cultured friend who had edited the Magazine and assisted in bringing out the first Hymn Book in 1850. This Hymn Book, however, was the private venture of William Sanderson, who handsomely gave way for a Connexional Hymn Book in 1874. The editors of the later book were W. Brimelow, R. Entwistle and W. Oxley.

and the two former lived to join in editing a new hymnal, completed in 1902. It is a matter of deep regret that Robert Entwistle was not spared to see its completion. The general acceptance of the new hymnal is in itself a testimony of the growth of connexional spirit.

It was no easy matter to concentrate the attention of the Annual Assembly on the "dry bones" of business and to limit the discursiveness of the brethren, who were always ready for "experience" meetings. The writer recalls one



WILLIAM SANDERSON.
1811—1899.

of the earliest Annual Meetings he attended, where there were four motions and not one seconded, and where the President got out of the tangle by giving out a hymn, the hearty singing of which restored good feeling and order. As years have passed regulations for facilitating business have been devised and men of ability have been forthcoming to fill the highest positions with credit to themselves and benefit to the Churches.

• In 1846 there were only 25 present, including the veteran, James Cooke, a breezy and genial personality, whom

we are all glad to have made us to-day. All the other churches are there crowded. If James Clarke had not told the story he could depict a great transformation in the personnel of the Annual Assembly. In the midst and for the most there is about the same story about the responsibility of Connexional office could be proved was proved, but it is now matter for rejoicing that there is an increased number of men of capacity and standing in the several districts who formed at the last our Connexional service. The Annual Meeting display business aptitude, and will fortunately compare with religious assemblies of greater magnitude. The officers of the Connexion are so numerous, the business is so varied, and the work done for the Independent Methodist Area of the Continent in trusty hands.

OUR LOSSES AND THEIR CAUSES.

If our benefactors had been able to devote as well as yet, the Connexion would have covered a wider area. To-day Lancashire and Preston in Scotland, Manchester in Ireland, are gone; so are Birmingham and West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, Barrow, and other places in the Midlands. We have Churches at Newcastle and Tyne, as at South and Middlesbrough, Chester, Glasgow, Hull, Kingston, Newcastle, South Shields, and other places in the North. Some of these are in the hands of the Wesleyan, and a number of Churches in North Wales. In all these our Churches were in connection with us have dropped out of our ranks.

It is not sufficient to find the causes of these losses. For the first few decades there was practically no organisation and Churches came and went at their own will. Many of them were in rented rooms, and in cases where buildings were erected, even when the funds had been collected in all the Churches, they could be taken over to some other denomination, as the trust deeds did not prevent it. Here is an illustration in point. In 1830, Sheffield, a strong Church, joined the Wesleyan Protestant Methodists and even asked by contracts the other Churches to join them. In those early days Churches professing our principles had much opposition. Too often also they made themselves religious Essays. As a rule, too, the members were poor. A few who tried to establish again an Independent Methodist Church at Sheffield reported "we hope for a time when poverty will be no more." In many reports there are appeals for help, and details of persecution and difficulties. Strong and pressing came the appeals in 1830 and onwards from Liverpool and North Wales district.

Their constant cry was for missionaries. Glowing accounts of revival came, and then in 1830 they are missing without a word in the Annual Meeting minutes to account for their disappearance. Other sources of information show that they joined the Wesleyan Association.

In response to appeals for help the Annual Meeting could do little. Its first attempt was the formation of a Missionary Committee stationed at some Church, Bolton often taking up the work. Evangelists were sent by this committee to visit the Churches. Peter Phillips, Alexander Denovan, William Sanderson, and others used their leisure for the visitation of Churches and helping weak societies. In 1846 another plan was added for cultivating brotherly intercourse among the Churches and was continued for some years. Manchester Church was appointed to visit Lymm, Warrington went to Stockport, Liverpool to Bolton, and so on. It was not until our District Meetings were more perfectly organised and the Connexional Committee made more representative that the Churches received the oversight and had the intercourse they so much needed.

EVANGELISTIC WORK.

In the forties Alexander Denovan advocated the sending out of evangelists, and was an effective one himself, but no scheme on a sound and workable foundation was agreed upon until William Brimblew carried a resolution on the subject at the Annual Meeting in 1870, held at Smith Street, Oldham. This resolution led to evangelists being sent out by the Connexion under the Evangelistic Committee's supervision. There was a period of difficulty and threatened secession. Some of the elders, for whom William Sanderson was spokesman, shook their heads ominously over the decision, or uttered jeremiads, afraid lest the voluntary principle should be infringed. These fears have proved groundless, for since then many evangelists have gone out. Amongst the earliest were the sainted James Seddon, ever-singing Thomas Cooke, John Knowles "sound John," Joseph Birchall, Robert Perry, and R. Lee, the latter two returning to successful business careers, but still giving service in Mission work. Now the evangelists are more numerous, and the Evangelistic Committee's income is more than £400 per annum as compared with the £15 or £20 of the old Missionary Committee. The last and most hopeful feature for expansion is the sending out of our first volunteer missionaries for the Foreign Mission Field in Joseph Robinson and his wife, who this year have commenced, in co-operation with the Society of Friends, medical mission work in India.

REPORT OF THE LAY CHURCHES.

In the representation of the Lay Churches, Scotland, appeared at our Annual Meeting. These churches have not adopted as a protest against undue influence of ministers power in a Presbytery. Methodists, indeed, and who regarded the mutual assistance that is the essence that a Union of Churches should exist between them, seem to have not carried out a system of Church government which to them was an experiment. By the agency of our Northern agents there have been formed six Churches in Scotland, District No. 1 in Southwestern District, No. 2 in Newcastle, No. 3 in Glasgow, and one in Edinburgh. They are identified as the Northern Church, Edinburgh, and most representative to our Annual Assembly, an experiment which may

eventually succeed. As a matter of fact, the system of visitation in the present system of representation by individual churches, Associated Methodist Churches, which have more than 1000 members and 75 ministers, are the names of William Jackson, Thomas Layton, Robert Hays, J. W. Johnson, and Myers, Whayman, whose names are themselves.

A summary of our mission as given in the new Year Book shows that we have 113 Churches, 13 Mission Stations, 3700 members, 383 ministers, 1300 Sun-



JAMES A. FREEMAN
1851-1877

day schools, 17,724 scholars, 3000 teachers and officers, and property valued at £200,000, on which there is a debt of £51,786, most of the property having been erected during the last 30 years.

The Annual Meetings of the past few years have afforded much evidence of the growing friendliness among the Free Churches. For a number of years representatives of the Wesleyan Reform Union have sat in the meetings and an interchange of pulpits has been maintained. Deputations from local Free Church Councils have welcomed the Annual Meetings to the various towns in which it has met, and last year a deputation was received from the Wesleyan Conference. The opening of Free Church pulpits to our ministers has also been a feature of recent Annual Meetings, and has given evidence of a growing appreciation of our ministry and denominational work.

OUR GROWTH.

Data is not available for giving in figures the growth of our Connexion in Churches and membership. Until 1864 the figures are not reliable.

Year.	Churches.	Ministers.	Members.
1805	16	—	1190
1814	36	—	—
1824	31	—	—
1834	34	—	—
1844	29	—	—
1851	41	—	—
1864	57	188	2730
1874	80	249	3538
1884	97	290	5089
1894	118	337	6773
1904	143	383	8799

THE FUTURE.

All our Connexional organisations are in a healthy condition, there is a determination to adapt the organisation of the Connexion to growing needs, and the Churches are showing a most gratifying desire to spread our principles and to engage in the work of extending Christ's Kingdom both at home and abroad.

LIST OF ANNUAL MEETINGS, NAMES OF PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES.

YEAR	ANNUAL MEETING AT	PRESIDENT.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT	SECRETARY.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT
1805	Manchester	..	..	..	Macclesfield
1806	Manchester (?)	..	..	..	Stockport
1807	Macclesfield	..	..	..	Stockport
1808	Macclesfield	..	..	..	..
1809	Manchester	..	Richard Harrison	T. Gregory	..
1810	Warrington	..	..	..	..
1811	Macclesfield	..	John Berisford	Peter Ashley	..
1812	Manchester	..	J. Crawshaw	Peter Ashley	..
1813	Warrington	..	..	..	..
1814	Oldham	..	Peter Ashley	J. Goodier	Wilmslow
1815	Sheffield	..	Peter Ashley	Wm McGuinness	Warrington
1816	Blackburn	..	Peter Phillips	W. Massey	Warrington
1817	Stockport	..	Benjamin Daffin	J. Higson	Blackburn
1818	Warrington	..	Richard Mills	J. Higson	Blackburn
1819	Manchester	..	Peter Ashley	J. Shaw	Manchester
1820	Sheffield	..	Peter Phillips	Wm McGuinness	Warrington
1821	Oldham	..	Benjamin Daffin	J. Turton	Sheffield
1822	Warrington	..	Peter Phillips	W. H. Stephenson	Gateshead
1823	Manchester	..	Peter Ashley	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow
1824	Bolton	..	Peter Phillips	S. Balmer	Warrington
1825	Sheffield	..	Peter Phillips	J. Mallison	Bolton
1826	Oldham	..	Peter Phillips	M. McMillan	Earls Heaton
1827	Warrington	..	W. Morton	George Turton	Sheffield
1828	Manchester	..	Peter Thornley	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow
		..	..	William Morton	Sheffield

LIST OF ANNUAL MEETINGS, NAMES OF PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES — continued.

YEAR.	ANNUAL MEETING AT	PRESIDENT.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT	SECRETARY.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT
1829	Bolton	Benjamin Dattin	Sheffield	J. Davies	Lancaster
1830	Oldham	Gamaliel Swindells	Stockport	H. Perkins	Manchester
1831	Oldham	J. Lees	Oldham	J. Mayall	Oldham
1832	Warrington	Peter Phillips	Warrington	S. Peacock	Salford
1833	Manchester	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Davis	Lancaster
1834	Bolton	T. Jones	Liverpool	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow
1835	Wigan	T. Jones	Liverpool	T. H. Massey	Nantwich
1836	Oldham	Humphrey Harper	Salford	J. Mavall	Oldham
1837	Warrington	Humphrey Harper	Salford	J. Kelly	Manchester
1838	Bradford	Thoma Oxley	Manchester	R. Roberts	Bolton
1839	Manchester	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	R. Roberts	Bolton
1840	Bolton	S. Johnson	Manchester	J. Kelly	Manchester
1841	Wigan	Peter Phillips	Warrington	J. Holmes	Worsley
1842	Oldham	Peter Phillips	Warrington	J. Bentley	Stockport
1843	Warrington	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	J. Bentley	Stockport
1844	Stockport	J. Armit	Manchester	J. Bentley	Stockport
1845	Liverpool	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1846	Manchester	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	T. Dunning	Stockport
1847	Bolton	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Jas. Bentley	Stockport
1848	Oldham	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	J. Bentley	Stockport
1849	Lancaster	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool	F. Furniss	Lancaster
1850	Liverpool	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1851	Glasgow	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1852	Warrington	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	James Gandy	Warrington
1853	Manchester	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1854	Bolton	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool

LIST OF ANNUAL MEETINGS, NAMES OF PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES—continued.

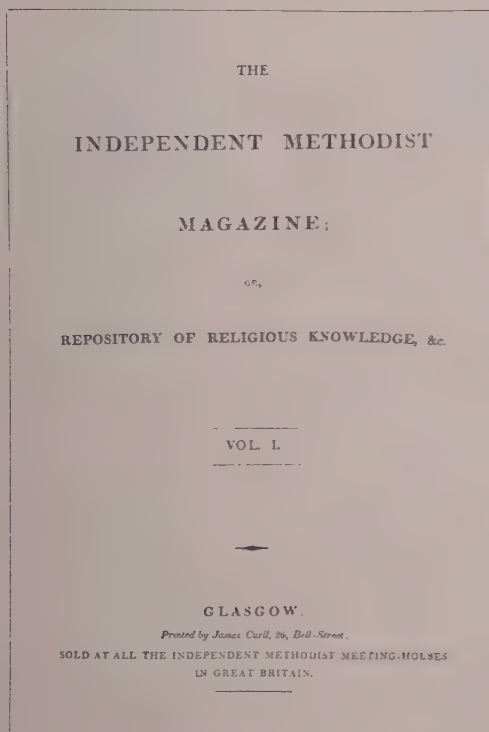
YEAR.	ANNUAL MEETING AT	PRESIDENT	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT	SECRETARY.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT
1855	Liverpool	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1856	Nelson	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	W. Sanderson	Liverpool
1857	Lancaster	Thomas Oxley	Manchester	S. Fitzgerald	Lancaster
1858	Wigan	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool	S. Fitzgerald	Lancaster
1859	Oldham	John Nield	Oldham	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1860	Manchester	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1861	Liverpool	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1862	Nelson	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1863	Bolton	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool
1864	Warrington	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Edward Twiss	Warrington
1865	Liverpool	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	Edward Twiss	Warrington
1866	Roe Green and Studdley	Edward Twiss	Warrington	William Oxley	Manchester
1867	Oldham	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	James Vickers	Bolton
1868	Nelson	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	James Vickers	Bolton
1869	Glasgow	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1870	Lancaster	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1871	Bolton	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool	William Hamber	Bolton
1872	Liverpool	John Knowles	Lynn	Jasper Lattling	Liverpool
1873	Warrington	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Wright	Warrington
1874	Cole	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1875	Cocklehaton	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1876	Smith Street, Oldham	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1877	Noble Street, Bolton	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1878	Glasgow	Alex. Denovan	Glasgow	William Oxley	Manchester
1879	Adrian under Lane	William Oxley	Manchester	Alfred Roscoe	Bolton

LIST OF ANNUAL MEETINGS, NAMES OF PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES—continued.

YEAR.	ANNUAL MEETING AT	PRESIDENT.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT	SECRETARY.	MEMBER OF CHURCH AT
1880	Sindsley	Wm. Sanderson	Liverpool	Alfred Roscoe	Bolton
1881	Warrington	William Oxley	Manchester	Silas Cooke	Manchester
1882	Nelson	Matthew Kennedy	Wigan	Alfred Roscoe	Bolton
1883	Sunderland	Matthew Kennedy	Wigan	Alfred Roscoe	Bolton
1884	Liverpool	William Brimelow	Bolton	Matthew Kennedy	Wigan
1885	Pendleton	Alfred Roscoe	Bolton	William Oxley	Manchester
1886	Oldham	James Proe	Wigan	John Wild	Oldham
1887	Colne	Wm Crumblehulme	Bolton	John Wild	Oldham
1888	Bolton (Noble Street)	Wm Crumblehulme	Bolton	Robinson Foulds	Colne
1889	Stretford	Thos. Worthington	Wigan	Robinson Foulds	Colne
1890	Nelson (Barkerhouse Road)	Thos. Worthington	Wigan	Robinson Foulds	Colne
1891	Pendleton	Thos. Worthington	Wigan	Robinson Foulds	Colne
1892	Wigan	William Faote	Liverpool	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1893	Bolton (Folds Road)	Benjamin Dyson	Oldham	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1894	Barnoldswick	William Brimelow	Bolton	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1895	Oldham	William Brimelow	Bolton	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1896	Bingley	William Brimelow	Bolton	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1897	Warrington	Richard Lee	Wigan	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1898	Moorside	Richard Lee	Wigan	Freck. Wilkinson	Bolton
1899	Nelson (Salem)	William Branfoot	Sunderland	Ward H. Riding	Colne
1900	Stretford	John Crumblehulme	Bolton	Ward H. Riding	Colne
1901	Leigh	John Crumblehulme	Bolton	Ward H. Riding	Colne
1902	Colne	Arthur Watson	Nelson	Ellis Barker	Colne
1903	Sunderland	George Hunter	Leigh	Ellis Barker	Colne
1904	Liverpool	George Hunter	Leigh	Ellis Barker	Colne

THE CONNEXIONAL MAGAZINE.

FAC-SIMILE OF TITLE PAGE OF FIRST ISSUE, 1823.



A LIST OF EDITORS SINCE 1823:—

ALEXANDER DENOVA. 1823—1848. 1864—1868.
SAMUEL FITZGERALD } 1849—1858.
WILLIAM SANDERSON }
EDWARD TWISS. 1860—1864.
WILLIAM BRIMELOW. 1868—1876.
RICHARD BRIMELOW. 1896—1901.
ARTHUR MOUNFIELD. 1901.

1874--1902: A CONTRAST.



THE Annual Meeting groups of 1874 and 1902 at Colne reveal at a glance the changes of the Connexion in the interval of 28 years. Both groups are representative of the workers in our Churches then and now. All the members of the Connexional Committee, unfortunately for the completeness of the 1902 group, were not present, but the portraits in the Connexional Committee groups will to some extent cover their absence from it. The other group of 1874, which was the first time the representatives had been photographed together, will recall many memories. Of the 68 on the group 35 have passed away, William Widdup and Norman Edmundson within the last twelve months, each having been a preacher for fifty years in Colne and Nelson Circuit. All in the front rank have been called higher, except Thomas Lush, of Burnley, who is still spared to his Church.

The positions of Alexander Denovan and William Sanderson are typical of the influence they have wielded in our Churches. Fifty-two years before (1822) Alexander Denovan made his first appearance at the Annual Meeting and was at once recognised as a commanding personality. For sixty years he preached the Gospel. An exact thinker, powerful in exposition, forceful in character, he sustained the office of President, Secretary and Editor at different periods with dignity and great usefulness. He compiled the *Testimony of Union* and he wrote "*An Appeal to the Christian World*," too little known among our people. In his early manhood he found time to study at the Glasgow University, and afterwards the leisure he was able to get from a busy business life was devoted to the Church in Glasgow and evangelistic work. His visits to the Lancashire Churches were always notable events. Ready for the great Reaper he was gathered home on October 24th, 1879, in his 86th year. William Oxley (son of one of our earliest preachers), who stands just behind William Sanderson, married one of Alexander Denovan's daughters, and was, like his father-in-law in turn, first Secretary and then President of the Connexion.

A more familiar figure, prominent for over 50 years, was



Photo by]

ANNUAL MEETING O



[J. Rushton & Co., Colne.]

UP, COLNE, 1902.

William Sanderson. He was pre-eminently a preacher. Burly in figure, with a rich, sonorous voice and magnetic personality, he had marvellous power in the pulpit. There he was king and swayed his hearers to the sweet music of the Word, which he could read and preach in a manner given to few. He was a soul-winner. For more than 60 years he laboured in the ministry, and three years before his death, which occurred in his 88th year in January, 1899, he recalled that he had travelled more than 80,000 miles on his preaching tours and preached and lectured 6,814 times. He was at various times President and Secretary of the Connexion and also editor.

Behind these fathers in Israel range men who in their spheres were equally potent for good. Close to John Stow, of Nelson is Thomas Lister, the hymn writer of Baildon Green. Then there is James Firth, of Oldham, the first Connexional Treasurer, and next to him is George Winterburn, of Bolton, who succeeded him as Treasurer, and was a financial pillar when new financial departures were being made. In the centre is John Knowles, whose praise is still in the Churches: he was a faithful preacher, and after serving as President became a Connexional Evangelist. James Seddon, of Oldham, stands next to him. He affected an ecclesiastical style of dress, but was a devoted soul, who "walked humbly with his God." At three different periods he went out as an Evangelist. James Cooke (Sindsley) and Matthew Mullineux (Roe Green) who are side by side, were representative preachers of a type which has almost gone. They were men of one Book—the Bible. Thomas Cooke delighted to sing its truths, and Matthew preached it with a picturesqueness all his own. His hand is on the shoulder of Samuel Cawley, of Shipley. "Sammy," though diminutive in stature, was a preacher of no mean repute, having the gift with all the Yorkshire fire.

Some will remember Jeremiah Halliday, of Bradford; John Landless, of Nelson; and of a later decade Thomas Foulds and James Holt, the spiritual builders of Colne Churches. Then there are William Fazakerley, of Pendleton; William Lyon, of Southport; and Thomas Adshead, of Stockport; all preachers welcomed in their day.

Of those who figure in the 1902 group the majority are young men and those in the prime of life, representative of those who are now directing the affairs of our Churches. This promises well for the future. "The old order changeth, giving place to new," and the composition of the group reflects faithfully the changes manifested in our Connexion during the last three decades.





The Portrett Group which was taken at Cologne, in 1922, is the most recent one of the Connexional Committee. Looking from left to right and reading from the bottom the names are: J. D. Wood, J. Crossley, J. Barker, A. Crossley, J. G. Hunter, W. H. Bolding, J. R. Marshall, J. Shew, E. Howarth, L. Hall, J. S. Riley, W. J. Pugh, A. Robinson, T. Huxley, B. Pucknett, E. Bibbison, and J. Wood.

[Photo by J. Ruckton & Co., Cologne.]

CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEE, 1904-5

OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT: GEORGE HUNTER, Leigh.
 EX-PRESIDENT: ARTHUR WATSON, Nelson
 SECRETARY: ELLIS BARKER, Colne.
 ASSISTANT SECRETARY: AMOS ROBINSON, Stretford.
 TREASURER: JOSEPH MOUNFIELD, Stockton Heath
 EDITOR: ARTHUR MOUNFIELD, Warrington.
 EVANGELISTIC SECRETARY: EDWARD RALPHS, West-
 houghton,
 BOOK ROOM SECRETARY: JOHN FIRTH WOOD, Wigan.
 MINISTERS' ASSISTANCE FUND SECRETARY.—WARD H.
 RIDING, Colne.
 CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR AND FOREIGN MISSION SECRETARY:
 JOHN W. HANCOCK, Stretford.
 TEMPERANCE SECRETARY: SAMUEL MARSH, Swinton.
 FINANCE SECRETARY: JOHN FIRTH WOOD, Oldham.
 AUDITOR.—AARON CROSSLEY, Oldham.

REPRESENTATIVES.

Alfred Blackburn, William Cann, James Shaw, Ellis Howarth,
 Isaac Hall, William Brimelow, John Crumblehulme, James Vickers,
 Richard Lee, Joseph Trickett, J. S. Riley, Joshua Ramsden, John
 Haytock, Jonas Sharp, Turner Hartley, Robert W. Collin, E. Embleton,
 B. Plucknett, W. J. Bartle.

CHAIRMEN AND SECRETARIES OF DEPARTMENTS.

Evangelistic.—John Crumblehulme, Chairman. Edward Ralphs,
 Secretary.

Visiting.—Richard Lee, Chairman; William Cann, Secretary.

Christian Endeavour.—Joshua Ramsden; John W. Hancock,
 Secretary.

Foreign Missions.—Arthur Mounfield, Chairman. John W. Hancock,
 Secretary.

Temperance.—Jonas Sharp, Chairman. Samuel Marsh, Secretary.

Bookroom.—George Hunter, Chairman; John Wood, Secretary.

Ministers' Assistance Fund.—John Haytock, Chairman. Ward H.
 Riding, Secretary.

Ministers' Education.—James Vickers, Chairman. Alfred Blackburn,
 Secretary.

Finance.—Arthur Watson, Chairman. John Firth Wood, Secretary.

INDEPENDENT METHODISM:

ITS CONSTITUTION AND POLITY.



THE origin of what we now know as the Independent Methodist Churches will have been gathered from the foregoing pages. What is understood by that title now? As a member of the denomination in the third generation I gladly briefly give reasons for the faith which is in me.

CONSTITUTION.

First as to our constitution. We are companies of believers in Jesus Christ and all which that implies, with an equality of opportunity but not of ability, owning Christ only as our Master. As believers we co-operate with each other in communities which, like the early Christians, we call Churches. These Churches have no authority but what the members confer. As none can work jointly without in some measure sacrificing individual liberty, we agree to be bound by common action and abide by the decision of the majority.

Each Church is an entity, yet associated with other Churches of like persuasion for mutual help. As no one is "to lord it over God's heritage" so no company of Churches may act in like manner over an individual Church. The source and seat of all authority is in the Church, in which the franchise is not restricted to one sex. Each Church orders its own affairs and appoints its officers. It joins with others, and as the individual yields to the Church his or her liberty so far as it will be helpful to all, so the Churches are expected to be loyal to the Connexion or Association of Churches.

ANNUAL MEETING NOT LEGISLATIVE.

The Annual Meeting of this Connexion is, therefore, not a legislative but a deliberative assembly, and cannot

intervene in the affairs of any Church without consent, and then only as brethren who win by persuasion.

MODEL OF THE CONSTITUTION.

The New Testament Church is our model. As to what was the internal economy of the earliest Christian Churches, let me cite modern scholars whose ability to give evidence is unquestioned. The late Dr. Hatch, a dignitary of the Church of England says in his *Bampton Lectures* that during the first two centuries of Christianity the ordinary member of the Church could (1) teach or preach, (2) baptise, (3) preside at the Lord's Supper, (4) exercise discipline.

Professor T. M. Lindsay, Principal of the Glasgow College of the United Free Church of Scotland, in his recent book on "*The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*," says that in those times "there is no trace of one man, one pastor, at the head of any community. The organisation of the primitive Christian Church in the last decades of the first century without one president in the community and with the anomalous prophetic ministry (wandering missionaries) has no resemblance to any modern ecclesiastical organisation." We have the spirit of this, for the president of a Church or of our Annual Meeting must be elected annually.

Dr. Fairbairn, Principal of Mansfield College, says: "Christ called no disciple priest, endowed none with priestly functions, made His collective society a holy and spiritual priesthood, but did not establish within it any priestly class. A completer act of abolition was impossible or one of mightier significance. The religious teachers of those days were without official sanctities. For once in the history of man there was a religion without a priesthood: men speaking of God in reasonable words to reasonable men. There was no religious caste, no rites too holy for the multitude. All the brethren were saints, all saints brethren, and to the pure all things were pure, to the holy men all mysteries were open and free. Then the Gospel was preached, and the men who believed lived; by speech and life the new religion lived and moved."

Our forefathers were not critical and learned scholars, but they knew the New Testament, and in forming Churches on the New Testament model they were ahead of their time. The most learned in all Evangelical Churches now attest that their position was sound and Scriptural. We are really Spiritual Republics—a democracy, a free Church. We assert the liberty of Christian men and

women to order their own Church life as brothers and sisters guided by the Spirit and directed by the Word of God.

THE MINISTRY.

From our equality of the brotherhood and freedom of service sprang what outsiders from the peculiarities of our denomination—its unpopularity. In other New Testament Churches the members are taught to work in Jesus's vineyard, but there is one plucked off—the pulpit—and it is held to be necessary that whilst other Christian labourers are engaged, the Gospel must come to the world through a ministry which receives a pecuniary reward. We are constantly told "that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," but we seldom have quoted from the same Apostle: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for money, but without charge, and travel night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you." A plain reading of the passage (I. Cor. ix. 14), "They who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," shows that the argument of the Apostle is that Evangelists should be maintained—not the pastor, elders, or bishops. Are we right in this interpretation? A similar passage could be quoted, and there is also contemporary evidence. In 1874, in a monastery in the Greek quarter of Constantinople, was found a notable document. It has every evidence of being a manual of rules for the Christian Churches in the latter part of the first century. The document is called "The Didache, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." It shows that even Evangelists or Apostles had limitations of maintenance, for in it we read: "Every Apostle who cometh to you let him be received in the Lord. He shall not remain except one day: if, however, there be need, the next day; but if he remain three days he is a false prophet. But when the Apostle departeth let him take nothing except bread enough until he lodge again, but if he ask for money he is a false prophet." It is also set forth that under exceptional circumstances an Apostle or Evangelist could settle for a time with a Church and have support, which was of the character of maintenance.

To quote Professor Lindsay again:—"The idea that when men are once set apart for the function of office-bearer in the Christian Church it becomes the duty of the Church to provide them with the necessaries of life does not belong to the times of primitive Christianity. The office-bearers of the Early Church were clergy in virtue of the call, election and setting apart by special prayer for sacred office, but they worked at trades, carried on mercantile pursuits, and were

not separate from the laity in their every day life. We find bishops who were shepherds, weavers, lawyers, shipbuilders, and so on, and the elders and deacons were almost invariably men who were not supported by Churches to which they belonged. An interesting series of inscriptions was found on the gravestones of the cemetery of the little town of Corycus in Cilicia Tracheia, records of the Christian community there. They can scarcely be older than the fifth and not later than the sixth century. One of them marks the burial place of a master potter and another that of a goldsmith, both of whom were elders or presbyters of the Church there."

NO SPIRITUAL CASTE.

It will thus be seen why we exist apart from other Free Churches. The most eloquent and learned expounders of what we specialise, if I may use the word—or rather are endeavouring to reproduce—are to be found in other Churches. All the Protestant Churches accept the teaching of the New Testament that believers are a "royal priesthood" that all must render service according to ability, and that Christianity means a brotherhood. We aim at putting into practice the common belief. As Barclay, the Quaker, said: "Those who love the light must minister according to the light and not for hire." All believers are in the ministry of service. Order and officers there must be, but no special caste: God calls to preaching, the Church approves the call. It is a privilege to labour; and not a matter for bargaining. Once create a privileged class, and evil follows both to the privileged class and the Church. We set before the world a Church in which there are no distinctions of ministers and laity. We discard the prefix "Rev." and other clerical titles, as did the Wesleyan Conference as late as 1821.

That such a Church once existed all careful readers of the epistles of the Apostle Paul and the Acts of the Apostles readily admit. We are encouraged to realize it now. Never was there a time when there were more voluntary labourers in God's Vineyard. The wide world Sunday School system testifies to that. The fact that in each ten pulpits in the Methodist bodies of Great Britain every Sunday there are seven unpaid preachers to three who receive remuneration and the movement in the Established Church to utilize still further its great army of voluntary labourers and to dignify them with greater privileges and recognition, are all illustrations of the possibility that our ideal may be attained.

OUR DOCTRINES.

Here we and all Evangelical Churches are on common ground. The main doctrines of the faith of Christendom it is our delight and privilege to teach. Briefly summarized they are :—

- 1.—The existence of one only living and true God, the Creator and Governor of all things; the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost.
- 2.—The inspiration of the Scriptures.
- 3.—The freedom of man, and his fall from a state of innocence to one of corruption and sin.
- 4.—Redemption through Christ only.
- 5.—The necessity of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 6.—That if these be real, they will be shown in the outward conduct by the performance of good works and the leading of a holy life.

OUR POLITY.

A few sentences will suffice to state our polity. Each Church is self-governed and elects officers, President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Stewards. These officers, along with the Ministers, Leaders or Elders representative of Church and School, form an executive for managing the details of the Church, and every important matter is referred to the Church meeting for its decision. In all matters of the central principle of our Church, where the seat and source of authority, is maintained."

COMBINED WORKING.

Chapters in localities convenient to each other follow the good Methodist plan of joining churches in Circuits or districts. So associated they are of mutual help, they come together to further the common cause, promote and arrange the exchange of ministerial labour, and are often of financial assistance to each other. No preacher is accepted unless first sent to the Circuit Meeting by the sanction of his Church. Of recent years the Conference has encouraged intending preachers to pursue a systematic course of preparation. Books and teachers are supplied, as it is recognised that preachers of the Word must be "workmen that needed not to be ashamed."

In addition to the local Circuits there is the Annual Assembly which meets on the third Saturday in June, and continues until the following Tuesday. Each Church has the privilege of appointing representatives in proportion to membership, and for every Circuit are nominated those who serve.

with the officers elected by the Annual Meeting, on an Executive or Connexional Committee, whose proceedings are subject to full review by the Annual Assembly. The Assembly has no legislative functions, none of its resolutions being effective without the loyal adherence of the Churches.

CONNEXIONAL EFFORT.

Through the Annual Meeting we are able to raise and administer a Ministers' Assistance Fund for aged and needy brethren; to direct the operations of Evangelists, there being an Evangelistic or Home Mission Fund to which the Churches contribute; to maintain the fellowship of the Churches; to form mission churches and by aid of the Extension Fund to give pecuniary help. A recent addition is the Foreign Mission Fund. We also publish a Magazine monthly, which has been ably edited from its inception by voluntary effort. We issue from the Bookroom publications which are of service to the Churches, and are proud to possess a Hymnal which ranks with the best.

In 1880 the Annual Meeting adopted the subjoined brief outlines of our position as Churches.

- I.—Doctrines, those commonly expressed by the term Evangelical.
- II.—Worship and services, those usual among Methodist Societies.
- III.—Every Church self-governed, managing its own financial and other internal affairs.
- IV.—Equality of Christian brotherhood, all members sharing in the government of the Church.
- V.—Ministry open and free, in contradistinction to an exclusive Ministry in which public teaching is confined to a Clerical or Ministerial Order. Every Christian is called by God to actively labour in His cause, and none can discharge his responsibility by proxy.
- VI.—We recognise no Clerical Titles or Designations.
- VII.—Our Ministry is purely voluntary and unpaid.
- VIII.—We have an Evangelistic Agency, brethren being appointed to go from place to place, preaching the Gospel, visiting weak and planting new Churches; and whilst so engaged they may be maintained, Evangelists having "liberty to live of the Gospel."
- IX.—Groups of Churches in adjacent neighbourhoods are associated in Districts, for ministerial and other mutual advantages.

JAMES VICKERS.

WARRINGTON DISTRICT.

WARRINGTON—FRIARS GREEN.



HE history of Friars Green Church began with the smallest or small beginnings. Peter Phillips and those who acted with him were sturdy champions of religious truth—men of deep religious experience, zealous, and abounding in disinterested labours. •

It is true that they were humble and comparatively poor, and because of this there is danger perhaps of underestimating the dignity and sacred duty they set themselves to do. None of them, so far as we know, were members of



FRIARS GREEN.

a profession. Peter Phillips himself was a chairmaker; but to undervalue his life's work because of his humble calling would be egregious folly indeed. Was not George Fox a shoemaker? Singular that the founder of Independent Methodism should make chairs and the founder of Quakerism should make shoes, but the Divinity of the work of each of them was not adversely affected by the incident of their secular callings. It were a pity if it did, for then should we part from our common Christianity given to us by the "Carpenter's Son."

We are, therefore, in no mood to complain that we can claim a founder no higher than a plebian chairmaker. From the first, Independent Methodist Church work and ministry were performed side by side with manual labour.

PREACHERS' PLAN, 1826.											
<p><i>"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name; but his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Jer. xx. 9.</i></p>											
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WARRINGTON PLAN—1826.

Humble, however, and simple as the social status of these men were, they were Divinely called and Divinely taught. They had a wide, comprehensive grasp of the Scriptures, and uncommon Spiritual enlightenment. The earnest, devoted character of these men was manifest, not only in religious matters, but equally so when public rights and morals required social and political defence.

Probably one of the cardinal convictions which inspired their opposition to clerical ascendancy and class arrogance in the Church was that, whilst these things existed it was hopeless and fatuous to expect free democratic conditions in our social and political institutions. They knew that in a very real and potent form the Church of any nation had much to do with the framing and moulding of national institutions. If the Church is oligarchic, then the nation!

institutions will be largely so too: if democratic, then much of our national life will be of that complexion also. We, therefore, suggest that the pioneers of Independent Methodism believed that God in giving the world at first a model Church—largely democratic—did so not only to form the basis of Church life for all time, but that in the event of the Church remaining typical of the first model it should, and inevitably would, impress its primitive democratic character on all national institutions.

From January to June, 1848.
FOR THE WARRINGTON CIRCUIT.

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THOSE TO THE FELLOWS.

1. P. Phillips, Warrington	17. J. Knight, Ashton
2. J. A. Smith, Liverpool	18. T. B. Smith, Ashton
3. W. A. Smith, Ashton	19. M. Smith, Ashton
4. J. Thompson, Liverpool	20. W. Smith, Ashton
5. J. H. Smith, Ashton	21. D. Smith, Ashton
6. J. A. Smith, Warrington	22. B. Smith, Ashton
7. J. A. Smith, Ashton	23. G. Smith, Ashton
8. J. A. Smith, Ashton	
9. J. A. Smith, Ashton	
10. J. A. Smith, Ashton	
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13. J. A. Smith, Ashton	
14. J. A. Smith, Ashton	
15. J. A. Smith, Ashton	
16. J. A. Smith, Ashton	

HYMN.

Then art gone to the grave but we will not
forget thee;
Thought across and darkness encompasses the
path.
The Father has paid thee its portals before
thou.
And the way of his love is thy guide through
the storm.

But the wide arms of mercy surround to
comfort thee;
And unseen may hope since the Father has died.
Then art gone to the grave and to murder
seemest;
Perhaps thy loved spirit is dead forever, but
thy love is still alive.

SINCE, WARRINGTON

WARRINGTON PLAN—1848.

Such were the men and their views who gave birth to Friars Green Church—men of noble mind and purpose, obedient ever to the inner light.

For such an ancestry our only feeling is that of thankfulness and justifiable pride. When we remember and repeat the names of Peter Phillips, Richard Harrison, Richard Mills, Peter Reid, Saul Rigby, William M'Guinness, Joseph Stout, George Brimelow, John Bryom, Joseph Massey, Samuel Balmer, and others of more recent date, we have naught but happy memories.

Friars Green Chapel was built in 1802. The building of this Meeting House taxed the resources and energies of the Church to the utmost. They were comparatively few and poor, but there was much free labour given by the male members of the Church, who cheerfully gave all their spare hours in the evenings to the building work. In this way the work proceeded until at length the building was finished.

We remember hearing Peter Phillips make reference to the fact that during the building of the chapel they had to bear much scoffing and ridicule from those who watched the work. He remarked there were descendants of Sanballat in those days, who said: "What do these feeble people; even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone walls."

This, however, did not happen, for the old Meeting House, built for the most part by shopkeepers, shoemakers and chairmakers, had an existence of some 58 years.

In the early days the members of Friars Green were known as "Quaker Methodists," and in many things, such as religious tenets, simple plain dress, quiet methods and silent waiting upon God, they had much in common with the Friends.

The writer very well remembers attending many meetings in the vestry of the old Chapel which were distinctly Quaker in their tone and character.

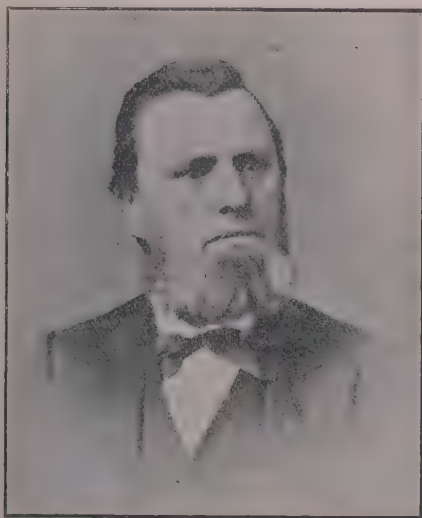
In those days of the long past invitations to silent prayer were frequently given by the leaders of the meetings, and, perhaps, a return to them might be a spiritual gain. Noise and show are the symbols of what is profane and worldly, and such things only madden and disturb those who seek spiritual thought and culture.

In one particular the founder of the Church at Friars Green was not a Quaker at all. We refer to his love of music. Peter Phillips possessed a sweet, deep, musical voice, and with it a sensitive, accurate ear, and had a good knowledge of the theory of music.

I remember an incident which shows how sensitive and fine was his conception and interpretation of music. Peter was conducting the rehearsal of a piece of music, in one part of which the trebles had to reach a very high note, which they were not able to do except noisily. Peter stopped them at once and told them they must get the note more softly and sweetly; but the singers assumed him this could not be done, on which he naively replied "Then what are we to do with our ears." The Phillips family as a whole was a musical family—singularly like the

Wesley family—the eldest son William attaining eminence both as a leader and composer.

In every other respect Peter Phillips reflected all that was typical of Quakerism, particularly in the matter of dress and the orderly, quiet manner, which affected even his bodily movements as well as his speech and conversation. This in a somewhat lesser degree may be said of the majority of the members of Friars Green Church at its formation.



WILLIAM HUDSON.
1830—1903.

Some 20 years after the building of the Chapel—in 1823—Brick Street School was built. The building of this school was Peter's project and suggestion. At the time named, Brick Street was—as now—the centre of a populous district of the poorer class. It occurred to him that a school in the neighbourhood might be built into which the waifs and strays might be gathered, and to whom might be given at least secular instruction, such as reading and writing. With no wider purpose than this at the first, the school was built, and many children, and even adults, found an opportunity to learn.

As the work at the school progressed the horizon of its

usefulness became larger and still larger until it became a never failing nursery for the Church at Friars Green. Soon Brick Street Sunday School became famous and well known in the district. It was here that nearly all the Warrington preachers gained their instruction. This was the training ground of such men and preachers as Joseph Shaw, John Wright, John Roberts, James Gandy, John Green, Edward Twiss, William Furness, James Brimelow, Joseph Mounfield, William Hudson—a list which might be easily extended.

Such was the humble origin of Brick Street Sunday School, out of which grew consequences and results far exceeding those in the mind of its founder.

In the year 1859 the old chapel was taken down and the present one built.

In 1867, the old school in Brick Street was taken down and the present one erected.

The year 1889 saw the commencement of mission services at Brick Street and 1896 the erection of a large and commodious mission chapel in Brick Street, the direct result of mission effort on the part of the Church at Friars Green.

W. W.

LOWTON COMMON.

In trying to ascertain the commencement of Methodism at Lowton Common we go back more than a century. Prior to 1794 there was a small society formed by the Wesleyans, and meetings held in cottage houses. After a time it was agreed to try and get a school, and a Mr. Eckersley, who owned some land on Lowton Common, gave a plot, on which a school was built. This was opened as a Wesleyan school in the year 1794. The place was afterwards used, for day school, Sunday school, and preaching services. Unfortunately, the cause almost died out, owing to its being unable to get a regular supply of ministers and workers. The condition of things became so low that there were no preaching services held for three or four weeks at a time. This state of things gave much anxiety and regret, and a number of those residing in the neighbourhood conferred together and tried to raise another cause. They took possession of the premises, which created some bitter feeling between the few remaining Wesleyans and the new comers, but the latter became the stronger party, and after a time the Wesleyans left the place in the hands of their rivals. The next step they took was to consult with Peter Phillips, of

Warrington, who promised to preach and help them. Thus the cause was again started under the name of Independent or Quaker Methodists, and a supply of ministers arranged for the services.

Shortly after this it became necessary to build a larger place. The old building was taken down and a more convenient school erected, which was opened in the year 1824, for children of all denominations. The following are the names of some of the pioneers of Independent Methodism at Lowton Common. Preachers: James Ashton,



LOWTON.

James Eekersley, John Chisnall, Jeremiah Collier, Jephtha Thompson, William Birchall, and others. Sunday school superintendents, teachers, etc.: Thomas Lowe, Abel Gresson, Richard Abertson, John Bridge, Thomas Cook, Robert Battersby, Joshua Ridyard, John Bent, William Winstanley, and William Smith. Eventually the cause prospered, so much so that a third school-chapel had to be built. This was completed and opened in November, 1849, by our late respected friends William Sanderson and James Gandy. The collections for the day amounted to £70—a very large sum to raise at that time. Since the above place was opened the work has so prospered and

grown that the trustees had to look out for more land on which to erect chapel and schools. They were very fortunate in securing a site near the old place for the sum of £200, on which a commodious chapel and schools have been built, the total cost being nearly £4,000. These buildings were opened on March 26th, 1880.

CULCHETH—TWISS GREEN.

In the second decade of the last century a few earnest Christian men met to encourage each other, and one of them, James Wood, tenant of an old farm near Kenyon Hall, granted the use of his kitchen: amongst his co-workers were Timothy Leather, John Fearnhead, Richard Hunt, John Goulden, John Massey and others. Public worship was continued in the kitchen until 1845, when a chapel at Croft, which was disused, was taken down and removed to a site given by Richard Hunt. This, after a few years, had an extension of 13 feet. In 1884 the old walls were encased with new brickwork, the chapel repaired and additions made at a cost of £600. In September, 1900, further alterations and additions were made, and an organ, the gift of John Hunt, placed in the enlarged organ chamber. Culcheth Church is a sturdy village cause.



CULCHETH.

GOLBORNE.

The history of this Church dates back to 1847. Previous to this time services had been held in the house of James Ashton, of Lawton. Lane Unsworth, his wife Ann, along with Robert and Ralph Ratcliffe and others of Golborne, attended these meetings. James Tuckett, of Wigan, in a conversation with Robert Ratcliffe, urged the advisability of securing a house at Golborne, as James Ashton was getting old and in the event of his death the society would probably be broken up. Accordingly, meetings were commenced in a weaving shop in Mill Street in 1847. After a time a fresh place had to be sought, but the only place available was an old dilapidated chanced cottage. This was rented in situ, and willing workers applied whitewash, and enlarged it by taking out the partition, thus making two rooms into one.

At this juncture, James Unsworth, Thomas Fearnley and Henry Wright joined the little band, and became active workers in the Sunday school.

John Fidd of Vulcan, led the class meeting every week, walking a distance of six miles. Great difficulties had to be overcome before land could be obtained for the premises, Methodists being held in bad repute. At length a plot of land was secured. Then there was another obstacle; although bricks were plentiful in Golborne, the feeling against the Methodists was so strong that none could be bought, and they were finally carted from Lane Head, Lawton. The bricklayer and plasterer came from Warrington, as the Golborne workpeople refused to take the work on hand. Robert Ratcliffe, Ralph Ratcliffe, and Peter Lawton did all the woodwork, and other members contributed their share of labour. The chapel was opened in 1850, John Packer, from Liverpool, being the preacher. While in this little chapel the cause steadily grew, until at length having cleared off the debt, it was thought advisable to erect a larger place of worship. A meeting was called, with the result that £100 was promised by the members towards a new chapel. Building operations were commenced in the spring of 1871, and to save expense the members willingly gave their services in excavating, &c.

The foundation stone was laid on Good Friday, 1871, by Robert Ratcliffe, of Golborne. The building did not progress very rapidly, and the opening did not take place until the Good Friday of 1872.

On Good Friday, John Knowles, of Lymm, preached, and on the following Sunday, W. Sanderson, of Liverpool.

The Church prospered much at this time, but in the succeeding years the membership declined, as, owing to bad trade and other causes, many families left the district. An organ was added in 1889, and the chapel as it now stands presents a very good appearance, being valued at £1,500.

DOWNALL GREEN.

Under the older name of Brockstage, the Church at Downall Green began to exist in the thirties of the last century.



DOWNALL GREEN.

The circumstances which brought about its establishment are as yet unknown. Meetings commenced in the cottage of Thomas Clarke, a nail-maker, who along with Thomas Cotton, Peter Fearnley and David Pilling (so far as is known) were the pioneers of the movement. Sunday school work does not seem to have been undertaken in the cottage. The weekly class and prayer meetings were held, for many years Henry Anderton, of Billinge, walking six miles to conduct the Monday evening class. After a number of years, the meeting place was transferred to the cottages of three of its members, in Church Street, where meetings were successfully held. As a result of

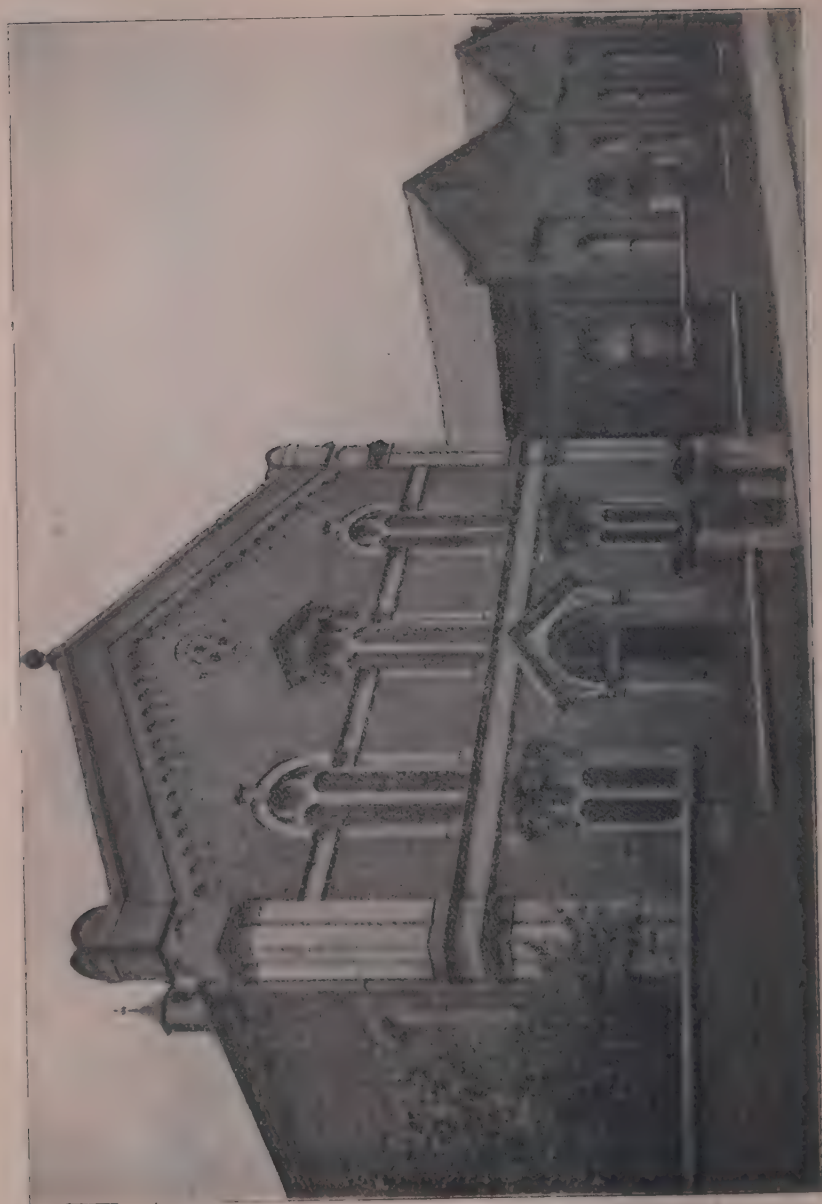
numerical progress, the meeting-place for the Sunday services was transferred to a nail-maker's cellar near the cottages. This more permanent building at once became the scene of efforts to win the young, Sunday school work being immediately undertaken. Meetings were also held in a barn in the adjoining village of Sims Lane End organised and conducted by one or two members of the cellar, and an annual camp meeting was held in the village. After a few years' successful work in the cellar, the members now numbering about twelve, thought that the progress made justified the erection of a school chapel. This was accomplished at a cost of £200, and provided sitting accommodation for about 100 people. The new premises were opened in October, 1859. For a little more than 20 years, successful work was executed. In 1882 the increase of scholars created new demands for accommodation. After due consideration, and having been fortunate in securing a most suitable site (which embraces within a radius of half a mile the three villages of Downall Green, Garswood and Sims Lane End) it was unanimously decided to erect a school chapel at a cost of £500. The foundation stones were laid on New Year's Day, 1892, and the opening services were held in June, 1894. The sitting accommodation is for 300. A little more than twelve months ago, the lack of Sunday school accommodation was again felt, and it was decided to enlarge the existing premises at a cost of £1,000. The new school has been built behind the Church and has accommodation for 200 scholars.

The Church is the only Methodist, and indeed the only Free Church, in a wide area. At present it is wielding a great influence in the district, having a splendid school of more than 200 scholars and 60 Church members.

GRAPPENHALL.

The removal of Thomas Leah from Lymm to Grappenhall led to the opening of a room for preaching in 1855. On May 2nd of that year sermons were preached by John Knowles and Thomas Ashton, and a Church of nine members formed. The meetings were held in the room until it became possible in 1881 to build the present Chapel. The building was opened on November 20th, the preacher being William Sanderson.

Recent years have brought an increased population to the village and it is pleasant to record that the past year has witnessed a great revival of interest and usefulness. The jubilee year promises to be the most remarkable in the Church's history.



LEIGH—THE AVENUE.

In January, 1877, when Joseph Birchall was an Evangelist in Warrington Circuit it was determined that an effort should be made to plant a Church in this growing town. A room was rented in King Street, and Bro. Birchall conducted services here on January 21st. He was aided by John Boydell, of Lowton Common, who conducted the singing, and George Hindley joined himself to the new cause. From the first the latter has been superintendent of the Sunday School and for the greater portion of its history so far the President of the Church. He and his family have done noble work. In the early days, John Knowles, who was then acting as a Connexional Evangelist and residing at Leigh, also did much to give solidity to the work. He had the pleasure of laying the foundation of a school-chapel on April 27th, 1878. The opening services took place on July 21st of the same year, Alexander Denovan preaching morning and evening, and William Bellamy in the afternoon. This school has now been considerably enlarged, and the present commodious and handsome Chapel was erected adjoining the Church, and facing the Avenue, in 1890, the memorial stones being laid on Good Friday, April 4th. William Sanderson and William Boote officiated at the opening services. The Church entertained the Annual Assembly in 1901, and one of its ministers, George Hunter, is this year President of the Connexion. Born of the mission spirit, the Church has exhibited the same, and from services it held in Atherton the present Church there has come. The Church also assisted in founding a Church at Tyldesley, and it recently drafted some of its members to the new Church at Westleigh, which had been planted through the labours of R. B. Woods, one of our Connexional Evangelists.

WARRINGTON—BRICK STREET.

As far back as 1820 Peter Phillips was impressed by the needs of the crowded population around Brick Street and commenced a Sunday school in a rented room. Three years later a Sunday school was built, to be succeeded again by a larger and better building. Whilst week evening preaching services were held regularly through a long period of its history it is remarkable that no steps were taken to form a separate Church. Not until 1886 was the building opened as a mission room. In September of that year a committee of five was appointed to begin a definite

mission work. This Committee consisted of Thomas Mayhall, James Shaw, Edward Roberts, Ed. Taylor, and Peter Lawton. For three and a half years evening service was held in the schoolroom and great success attended the effort. A request that morning service should also be held was not favourably received by the Friars Green Church, in whose control the building remained. It was felt that the spiritual needs of those who had been gathered together could only be met by the formation of a Mission Church. A room was opened in Battersby Lane, but it proved too



WARRINGTON—BRICK STREET.

small. A larger room in Crossley Street was next secured and a good work was carried on there for several years. Funds were quickly raised for the purpose of erecting a permanent structure in the shape of a well-equipped Mission Hall. A valuable site in Brick Street was secured and four cottages (bought at a cost of £350) were demolished. Upon the site the present substantial building was erected. The building cost about £2,500, and has a large Hall accommodating 350 people, and a number of classrooms. It has also a large basement, used as an infant school.

The building was opened in May, 1837. A flourishing Sunday school with 450 scholars and 20 active teachers may be mentioned as part of the work carried on. There are also Christian Endeavour Societies and a Band of Hope with 270 members. The future is indeed full of promise and hope.

PRESCOT.

Independent Methodism in Prescott commenced about 1818, when a few God-fearing men travelled from Warrington to explain the principles of Independent Methodism and established a Church. The meetings were held in a cottage. The services and ministerial help of friends from Liverpool were secured, who used their influence with a Mr. Miller, a builder, of Liverpool. He came to their assistance and in 1823 the first chapel was built in Bond Street. The difficulties of supplying the pulpit in those days were many, Prescott being ten miles from Warrington and eight miles from Liverpool, and preachers had to walk both ways. Financial difficulties arose, one chapel was sold and the society broken up. In 1830 William Sanderson, of Liverpool, came over to Prescott to start a mission, and on learning that the chapel in Bond Street was not being used he arranged for its tenancy. It was opened in September, 1830, Peter Phillips, of Warrington, preaching in the afternoon and W. Sanderson in the evening. In November a Sunday school was commenced with good results. Amongst those who became workers were John Brown, Reuben Morton, Peter Denton, and others who were identified with the Church up to their death. It was not easy to get land, but after repeated attempts in 1870 a small plot was secured in Heslede Street at a cost of £99 6s. Plans were prepared by John Thompson, of Lancaster, the foundation stone being laid by William Sanderson. Much voluntary labour was done by the members. The total cost was £738, of which £300 was borrowed. On February 26th, 1876, it was decided to purchase land on the west side of the Chapel in anticipation of future needs, as 150 to 200 scholars were being crowded into a room that was certified for 75; hence the new Sunday school was commenced and opened in 1881. Over the school and caretaker's house was a large public hall, which was let for public purposes. The cost of the new building was £1,350. In 1898 Arthur Mounfield prepared plans and the hall was converted into a chapel, which seats 500, the alterations costing £600. The total cost of the Church and school property is £3,350, and the present debt £300. The Church has helped to commence

Churches at Haydock, St. Helens and Sutton, and it also commenced the Church at Thatto Heath and it is now conducting a mission at Whiston.

WEST LEIGH.

This prosperous Mission Church owes its existence to the united efforts of the Avenue Church and the Connexion Evangelistic Department. A tent mission conducted by R. B. Woods was attended with great success, and a temporary iron building provided by the Connexion



WEST LEIGH.

soon became too small. The commodious Mission Hall shown in our illustration is in course of erection, and will afford enlarged opportunities for this vigorous Church.

TYLDESLEY.

This Church owes its beginning to the efforts of the Avenue Church, Leigh, who began a series of services sixteen years ago. The first meeting place was a room, entered from the Market Place. The building of the chapel in Primrose Street gave larger opportunities, and notwithstanding many losses by removal the Church continues to do a good and useful work. A good Sunday school gives promise of the future.

Warrington district has now 13 Churches and two Mission stations, 700 members, 2,730 Sunday School scholars, 203 teachers and officers, and property valued at £22,700.

MANCHESTER—HANOVER STREET.



There are left in some doubt as to the exact date of the commencement of the Mother Church of Manchester District. It seems likely that as early as 1798 the Church had an existence, and met in a modest way in a hired room. The earliest plans show it as meeting in North Street and as having a branch in Salford. There was also a meeting formed at Chapel Street, Bank Top, in a room described as "a large room over a shop and capable of seating 150 to 200 persons." According to the preaching register of Humphrey Harper, services were first held at Chapel Street in 1808, and continued to 1829. The Church at North Street appears in 1828 as having removed to Nicholas Croft, High Street. Ten years later witnessed the erection of Hanover Street Chapel. The securing of the freehold site and the erection of the building was a fine achievement and must have taxed their energies to the utmost. The chapel was opened February 25th, 1838. Among the honoured names of the Church's history may be mentioned Thomas Painter, Humphrey Harper, William Flynn, John Shaw, James Dewhurst, and Thomas Oxley. These men did good service in the founding of the Churches at Roe Green, Moorside and Stretford, as will be gathered from the following pages. In later years the name of Edwin J. Oxley, son of Thomas Oxley, has been closely associated with the Church's history. The development of Manchester has left the old building surrounded by warehouses and the movement towards the suburbs has almost removed the possibility of further usefulness, a situation which, in view of the history of past associations, we cannot but regret.



MANCHESTER DISTRICT.

ROE GREEN.



THE cause at Roe Green was started in or about the year 1808 through the efforts of a few men who walked from Manchester, week after week, one of whom was Thomas Painter, and another John Shaw. The meetings were held in the open air, the pulpit a being very large stone, which is still preserved. After the Church was formed the meetings were held in the house of Samuel Clarke, in Lumber Lane, a cotton manufacturer. On his death his son, Richard Clarke, came to reside in the house, which had been enlarged to meet the needs of the Church. Services were held regularly here for almost 37 years. Here also a Sunday School was formed in 1833. On the death of Richard Clarke, the members began to feel anxious as to whether they would be allowed the use of the room after the death of his widow. On consideration they decided to build a Chapel of their own. Great difficulty, however, was experienced in acquiring land, as almost the whole of

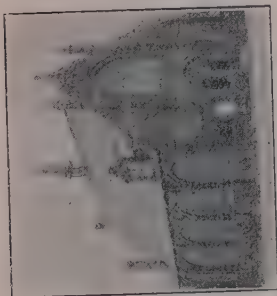
THE PREACHERS' PLAN.

1815.

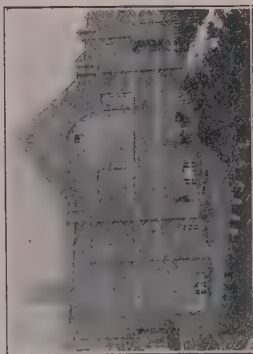
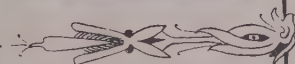
PLACES and HOURS	AUGUST				SEPTEMBER				OCTOBER				NOV				PREACHERS NAMES
	3	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	
North street 7	5	9	10	11	12	5	4	12	1	9	7	10	3	8	1	1	Thomas Es.
North-street, 10½ — Salford, 3½	6	3	11	2	4	11	12	1	4	4	11	6	7	2	3	2	Holland Beale
Salford 10½ — North street, 3½	7	2	3	4	1	2	2	3	6	7	2	5	1	11	1	10	James Brewster
Chapel street 10½ — Salford 2	2	8	7	1	9	1	1	1	1	2	12	10	8	3	1	8	Matthew Harvey
Chapel street — Salford 5	1	5	2	1	1	7	10	9	11	5	1	2	12	10	3	4	James Brown
New town 6	4	10	8	9	3	1	12	10	1	8	1	12	7	9	10	12	James Lockman
Swinton, 10 and 3	1	10	12	6	11	3	1	8	4	10	6	7	3	11	6	5	Benjamin Croucher
Roe Green 10 and 2	6	1	7	2	6	10	8	1	1	12	5	3	1	1	7	1	Thomas Es.
Culwich 2	11	2	10	8	12	11	1	3	2	4	9	7	10	3	8	11	William Bell
North street — Maccles 8	2	3	4	1	2	9	10	1	1	12	1	6	1	7	1	1	William Esau
Chapel street — Maccles 8	8	9	2	10	1	12	8	2	9	10	1	1	12	8	2	9	J. S. Shaw
Swinton street — Maccles 8	12	8	9	2	10	1	12	8	1	1	1	6	8	10	2	12	J. R.
Salford, Wednesday 8	1	9	2	1	1	7	10	6	1	3	1	8	6	7	10	9	3
North street Thursday 8	8	1	2	10	1	1	1	1	1	12	7	10	1	1	1	12	3
Pump-street Thursday 8	1	8	1	9	10	1	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3

S—Swinton — L—Lancaster — C—Culwich

Church.



House in which services were first held



Schools.

ROE GREEN.

the land was owned by the trustees of the late Duke of Bridgewater, who refused to sell or let land for a Nonconformist Chapel. Eventually land was secured from the late Edmund Leigh, on Roe Green, one of the stipulations being the removal of a barn, which stood upon the land, and its rebuilding upon another site, free of charge. This was done, and both the Chapel and barn were built very largely by the members, both male and female taking part. Some dug foundations, some dressed old bricks. Whatever, indeed, it was possible to do, they did. The building was opened in 1855.

The Sunday School was continued in the same building for a few years, but it was soon recognised that a separate building would be a great advantage, and accordingly a school was built and opened in the year 1857.

An organ was bought about the year 1873—up to this time a string band had led the singing.

Classrooms were added to the school in 1874, and the whole school was extended in 1879.

By this time the Church was found to be too small, and an agitation was set on foot for a new one. Eventually the old Church was pulled down, after having been used 30 years, and a new (and present) one was opened in 1884. The cost was £1,400, and after all expenses were paid it was found that a debt of £800 remained. This was removed in January, 1900.

Early last year land was secured and plans prepared for a new school. Foundation stones were laid on June 25th and the school was opened on November 20th, the cost being almost £3,000. It is perhaps the best equipped and internally the most beautiful school our denomination can boast of.

Of those who have been prominently associated with the Church, we may first mention Richard Clarke as the one in whose home the services were held; and Matthew Mullineux, who did yeoman service for us, will be remembered by many. Amongst others are George Parr, A. Pollitt, John Fogg, Mark Gaskell, Thomas Yorke, John Smith and Samuel Jackson, who have all gone to their reward.

Probably the Church and school were never so prosperous as they are at the present time. The Christian Endeavour, and Band of Hope (which celebrated its jubilee in 1902) are full of activity.

STRETFORD.

In the year 1820 a few warm-hearted Christian men journeyed from the neighbouring town of Manchester to mission Stretford—dark, benighted Stretford. They cast the seeds of the Kingdom with unsparing hand. Some fell in honest hearts, took root, sprang up, and bore fruit for the Master. These pioneers selected as their stand the spot in King Street, now occupied by Mr. Royle's grocery store, a bare space called the "Gravel," adjoining which was a hideous structure called the "Dungeon" or village lock-up. Side by side with this place, in a tent giving shelter during



STRETFORD SCHOOL.

inclement weather, the messengers delivered their message. This novel meeting-house gave rise to the early pioneers being dubbed "Tent Methodists." Such honoured names as Thomas Oxley, Joseph Armit, Zech. Allwood, J. Wallworth, J. Baxter and J. Evans were amongst the founders. These men walked backwards and forwards, there being no public conveyances in those days. The Word prospered, converts were added, until the tent was found too small to hold all who desired to hear the Word of God, so a removal to an old barn at the corner of Toad Lane (now Brunswick Street) was decided upon. Here the services continued and spiritual additions were made, so that in two years'



STRETFORD.

time the leaders were constrained to secure a more pretentious place in which to carry on the good work. A building standing at the south end of the village, formerly used for weaving purposes, offered the needful accommodation. Possession was at once taken, and limewash generously expended inside and outside transferred the dingy structure into a tolerably respectable "Temple." A reading-desk for pulpit, forms for seats, and candles supplying lights,



THOMAS OXLEY.

1794—1864.

completed the equipment of the "White Chapel," as it was then called. For 14 years the infant Church worshipped in this place, when again in the year 1836 a cry was raised for more room. The site of the present structure was leased, and the foundation stones were laid of an edifice whose walls were almost baptised with the tears of the exultant new-born converts. On completion it was used for school purposes as well as divine worship. In the year 1852 alterations took place involving a lowering of the foundations and remodelling of the windows. Again in the jubilee year of the Society (1870) the pews were taken out, and modern open seats of beautiful pitchpine, and of excellent workmanship, were substituted. We then cried like the Indian chief, "Alabama, Alabama!" (here is rest! here is rest!). But no, for nine years later it was decided to take down the former structure and replace it by the present one, the foundation stone of which was laid on Good Friday, 1879, its cost exceeding £3,500. After a period of 30 years the school (which was under the chapel) became so overcrowded that considerations of health, and the need for more room, made it necessary for the teachers to look afield, with the result that it was decided to purchase the adjoining house property, which had come into the

market, the price paid being £2,100. In the spring of 1902 five of these houses were taken down, and preparations were made for the building of a new school, the foundation stones of which were laid on 4th October, 1902, and the opening of which took place on the 28th June, 1903. This school has a seating capacity for 500 scholars, is provided with 16 class-rooms and a secretary's room, and has behind a spacious lecture hall holding 200 persons; the cost together with furnishing being about £3,550.

The present membership of the Church is 150. The number of scholars on the books is 350, and the number of teachers and officers 39. In connection with the Church and school are several useful auxiliaries, as for instance C.E. Societies, Band of Hope and Social Club. Our Church has the honour of having given to the denomination its first Foreign Missionary, in the person of Joseph Robinson, who set sail for India in November, 1904.

URMSTON.

The Urmston Independent Methodist cause was started more than 70 years ago. Urmston was then a rural village,



URMSTON.

without railway and without a building for religious worship. The inhabitants, only a few hundreds in number, comprised a few farmers, farm labourers, and hand-loom weavers.

The cause at Urmston started through a missionary enterprise, which had its seat at Hanover Street, Manchester, and spread through Stretford to Urmston. The first building used in Urmston was an old dairy, which had formed part of the outbuildings to a large gentleman's house. The building is still standing, and is known as the "Old Dairy." There are still living a few old people who remember meeting in this place, as Sunday school scholars; and they reveal to us the earnest, practical temper which characterised the founders of the Church. In Urmston, religious aggression took root in virgin soil and bore noble fruit. The first supporters gave themselves heartily to the work, and in a comparatively short time were able to consider the building of a small chapel.

W. Warrington, whose name is still cherished for the support he and his wife gave to the cause, gave land for a building site; the farmers in the district lent horses and carts, and the men gave their time; and they wrought earnestly and harmoniously, and the work prospered, and the chapel was built amidst joy and satisfaction—a monument of religious fervour and practical industry. This small chapel, with alterations and additions, was used as chapel and Sunday school for more than 40 years, when a great change took place in Urmston, not only in the Church, but also in the district and population.

A railway was constructed through Urmston, which brought it within 10 minutes' journey of Manchester, and converted it into a residential suburb.

The leaders of Urmston Church seriously applied themselves to the task of providing more and better accommodation for religious service, with the result that a new chapel was opened in the year 1878, which had cost the sum of £1,800.

There have been associated with Urmston Church some who have been known through the entire Connexion. Among the number are the names of Thomas Makin, who for many years was an earnest worker at Urmston, until the removal of his family to America in the year 1888, and of S. A. Beckett, who for more than 20 years was an earnest and devoted worker until his lamented death in the year 1903.

The progress of Urmston Church has been slow, and, perhaps, intermittent; but when we consider the small

beginning and present position we see a great contrast, though, perhaps, small for the number of years. The old building is used for a Sunday school, and the newer building is still sufficient for public services. Both of these buildings are free from debt, with the exception of a small sum.

We have a good staff of workers and a membership of 85. We have an active Christian Endeavour Society of 25 members, and we have the promise of good and consistent service in the cause of Independent Methodism, the glory of God, and the welfare of the people of Urmston.



MOORSIDE—CHURCH AND SCHOOL.

MOORSIDE.

The Moorside Church is the development of the cause at Sindsley, which had its beginning as an offshoot from Roe Green more than fifty years ago. Ninety years ago there was no Methodist Society in the district. The first services were those held in the open air by the preachers from Hanover Street Church, who took their stand upon a large boulder stone at the bottom of Tyldesley Fold. Among these first preachers were Thomas Oxley, Humphrey

Harper, Samuel Goodwin, Joseph Armitt and William Flinn. It was from this mission work that there grew the Church at Roe Green, which met for so long in the house of Richard Clarke. Those who know the district to-day will find it hard to believe that the early services were greatly disturbed by roughs, and that disturbances and persecutions were common experiences. Richard Clarke at length intimated his intention of starting a cause at Sindsley. He did so, and the old smithy, as it was called, adjoining the Mill, served as a preaching room. The Mission gathered to itself a number of worthy men, who sustained it after the death of Richard Clarke, and whose labours gave strength and permanency to the work. Among them were Peter Valentine, Thos. Clarke, James Longworth, Robert Grundy, William Jackson, Thomas, James, and Henry Cooke, Richard Clarke, George Farnworth and James Tyldesley.

In 1849 a chapel was felt to be a necessity, and the earnestness with which the scheme was undertaken, there being only £24 in hand at the time, betokened its ultimate success. The soil was cut in June, 1849, and on December 2nd the building was opened. The preachers on that day were Thomas Oxley, John Parkinson and William Sander-son. The zeal shown in the erection of the building served as an admirable object lesson to the district, and left no one in doubt as to the earnestness of the builders. The bricks were made on the spot, and it was no uncommon thing to see women "walling," with babies tied across their shoulders. The cost of the building was £1,000, nearly £700 of which was raised during the six months occupied in building. The Sunday School made much progress along with the Church, and the school was rebuilt in 1876.

The last twenty years have brought great changes in the district. The old Mill was destroyed by fire and not rebuilt, and a steady decline in the district began: With the decline of Sindsley came the rapid growth of Moorside, and it became evident that a removal of the cause would bring increased usefulness. A decision to that effect was taken and the first stones of the present buildings were laid on April 11th, 1891. The opening services were held in December of the same year, and the cost was £2,100.

The very fine Sunday School which appears in the photograph was built at a cost of £2,000 in 1901.

Among those who have been honourably associated with the Church during more recent years may be named: John Morton, William Clarke, Samuel Dutton, Joseph Cooke, John Chapman and Thomas Cooke. All are gone to their reward.

PENDLETON.

The earliest history of this Church generally accepted runs as follows :—In the year 1855 three men, who came to Pendleton to obtain work, were desirous of doing good in their spare time, and resolved unitedly to gather the children together from the streets and teach them, and also hold preaching services of a simple character. They proceeded cautiously, owing to very limited means. A commencement was made in a cellar, and the rent was paid out of their weekly earnings. Though difficulties assailed them they never despaired or deserted their work. Soon the cellar became too small, and they migrated to an empty room over two houses some short distance away. Here



PENDLETON.

they were joined by others, and heaven blessed their labours and gave the increase.

During those early days of the cause the musical portion of the services were very limited — two tunes being the full extent of their knowledge. Even when they bought a small instrument (a harmonium) they had to get a player from Urmston, who frequently walked all the way there and back, a distance of five or six miles. This innovation did not strike some of the ministers as being in accord with true wor-

ship. On one occasion the minister gave out a tune no one knew but himself, so he turned to the organist and said, "Never mind, we'll sing it, and we can do without thee and thy box of tricks."

The first record of a minute book dates June 24th, in the year 1860. Respecting the ministry of this period one could fill volumes with anecdotes of their eccentricities. Though they were for the greater part illiterate men, they were very earnest and enthusiastic in the cause of Christ.

In 1863 the foundation stone of the present Sunday School was laid, the second home in Hankinson Street proving too small for the growing organisation. George Bedson, of Bradford, Manchester, performed the ceremony, whilst Thomas Oxley, of Manchester, preached the opening sermons. The cost of the building, with the class-rooms afterwards added, amounted to £600.

During the next few years a day school was established and then abandoned, and a bazaar was held. The various auxiliaries attached to the school flourished, and the fruits thereof were to be seen on every hand.

In 1881 it was decided to erect a chapel in front of the school, the foundation stones for same being laid on April 7th, 1882. The building was completed in November of



MATHEW MULLINEUX.
1821- 1891.

the same year: the entire cost amounted to £1,600, half the money being in hand, the other half being under mortgage.

A leap of years finds us better off and more inclined to follow the times, a new pipe organ being formally opened by T. Sharples, Mus.Bac., F.R.C.O., on January 27th, 1894, the cost of same being £150.

Alterations and additions to the building continued for a space of five years. Towards the end of the year 1897 we had the pleasure of witnessing the dying struggles of the debt on the chapel. In 18 years, the mortgage, £800, with the interest, £600, making a grand total of £1,400, was paid off. So on April 13th, 1900, Good Friday, a grand gathering of old and new scholars, teachers and members assembled at the Chapel to commemorate the event.

Some two years later the Church was re-decorated and electric light was installed, which involved an expenditure of some £300.

It is expected some time in the coming year we will be able to finally pay off all accounts owing on that score. A new school must next claim our attention.

With all our modern innovations the spiritual life of the Church has not been neglected. The Christian Endeavour, the class meetings and prayer meetings continue to do silent service for the Church and the glory of God.



WILLIAM OXLEY.

1833—1898.

BRADFORD—(MANCHESTER).

In 1865, a few connected with Hanover Street Church, prominent amongst them being William Oxley, commenced to hold open-air services in Bradford, the first taking place on May 8. The services were attended with good results, so the house and shop, 123, Mill Street, were rented and opened as a preaching room and school on July 1st of the same year. There was a Church membership of six, two teachers and 48 scholars. Next a piece of land was bought in Mill Street, and on December 22nd, 1867, William Sander-son preached the opening sermons of a school-chapel which had been erected upon it at a cost of £602. In 1885 classrooms were added at a cost of £168. William Oxley and his sisters Mary, Emma and Rebecca, laboured devotedly for the cause, and gave generously of their means. Only Sister Rebecca Oxley is left to see the fruit of the work done. The Church and school are in a thriving state, and it is proposed to build this year a new chapel, towards which there is £800 in hand. Whilst working for the Church, William Oxley also gave time for Connexional affairs and was for six years Connexional Secretary and two years President.

MANCHESTER—VARLEY STREET.

The Church dates from 1869. In that year a few friends rented a room, four yards square, over a coalyard in Hamilton Street, Collyhurst, for the purpose of forming a Mission Church. So successful were their efforts, that they were shortly compelled to take a larger room upon the same level. In the following year, 1870, a Sunday School was opened, which soon had 150 scholars. Some of these are with us to-day and have never been dissociated. Among them we might name Sister Alice Rogerson, Sister F. H. Riddle, Sister F. Conrad and Bro. W. H. Fildes. Anxious to have a building of their own, steps were taken to secure land, and the site on which the present Chapel is built was secured from the Dean and Canons of Manchester. Among other efforts to secure means to erect a building a bazaar was adopted, which was held in the old Police Station, Livesey Street, Oldham Road (now occupied by a branch of the Hugh Oldham Lads' Club). In the year 1873 the Church was opened, and was used both for Church and school purposes. Unfortunately dissension crept in: the Church became weakened, and for several years its usefulness was greatly lessened. During the last 12 or 15 years a better and more energetic spirit has prevailed and the



SAMUEL ROGERSON.

Church has done good work and the membership stands at 90. The Sunday School is strong and vigorous, having 400 scholars and 20 officers and teachers. The Adult Bible Class has a membership of 183. An extension of the premises is in progress which will cost £1,200, and will provide a large school and classroom. Towards this we hope to realise £900 by the time the work is finished. The first preachers in Hamilton Street were the late Luke Butterworth and

his wife. Samuel Rogerson joined in the year 1871, and his devoted service up to the time of his death is too well known to need record.

SALFORD—UNWIN STREET.

In the year 1884 a few working men, eager for the betterment of their fellows, agreed to rent a room in the Ragged School, Ellor Street. Their meetings were held on week evenings, and were devoted chiefly to the advocacy of Temperance. Success attended their efforts, but it became evident that Sunday services were an essential of their work. As the Ragged School was not available for any save week-evening meetings, premises in Unwin Street were secured. By dint of energy the room was made presentable and the work of a Gospel Temperance Mission began. In 1894 the cause became associated with the Manchester Circuit, and has derived much help and encouragement from the union. The surroundings of the Mission are very unfavourable, and it is hoped that better accommodation will soon be provided.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

Independent Methodism was planted in Ashton-under-Lyne in 1818, the cause being a very common one at that period, a dispute with the Wesleyan Superintendent Minister. George Hollingworth, Edmund Roe, James and William Wright rented an upper room in Stamford Street,



ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

known as Bullman's Buildings. Here preaching services were held, and in 1821 a Sunday school was commenced in an old mill at Charlestown. Soon after Stamford Street rooms were given up, all efforts being devoted to Charlestown. Preachers came from Oldham and Manchester, but of the original band only George Hollingworth remained

with the cause, for which he laboured up to his death in 1859. He was joined by John Miller, Alex. McWhite and Abraham Walker. A plot of land in Wellington Road was secured, and a chapel and school were erected at a cost of £420. The corner-stone was laid by Humphrey Harper, of Manchester, on March 17th, 1838, and the opening services preached by William Sanderson and John Parkinson. The Church's prosperity has ebbed and flowed, but in 1877 the Church felt strong enough to erect the present chapel and school, the foundation stone being laid by Abraham Buckley and Alexander Denovan. There is now a Church membership of 54, and the Sunday School is in a good state.

BROADHEATH.

The Mission Church here began as a tent mission under the care of R. B. Woods two years ago. Land has been secured, and a temporary building provided by the Manchester Circuit. A Sunday school has been formed and promises to do good work.

Manchester District has now nine chapels and one mission station, 808 members, 2,497 Sunday school scholars, 206 teachers and officers, and property valued at £21,050.



OLDHAM DISTRICT.

OLDHAM—GEORGE STREET.



HIS Church has two distinctions: It originated in a secession from the Established Church, and claims to be the first to use the title of Independent Methodist. In the first years of last century a company of men and women who were connected with St. Peter's Church decided to meet each Sunday afternoon for mental help in the Christian life. They rented a room in Whitehead Square, which had been built for a model mill. For this they incurred the displeasure of the incumbent of St. Peter's (a Mr. Winter), who called upon them to desist. Rather than alter their plan they separated from the Church and went on the New Testament way. The date cannot be exactly fixed. Lorenzo Dow mentions in his diary

THE INDEPENDENT METHODIST PREACHERS' PLAN, FOR THE OLDHAM CIRCUIT,—1832.

PREACHER	1st term										2nd										3rd										4th										5th																																																											
NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
1. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
2. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
3. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
4. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
5. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
6. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
7. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
8. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
9. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
10. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
11. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
12. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
13. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
14. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
15. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
16. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
17. Theological	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36																																																																



FIRST MEETING PLACE.



GEORGE STREET.

that he preached for the Independent Methodists at Oldham in 1806. The earliest Church records show that Betty Jackson was admitted a full member in 1807. In April, 1815, the foundation stones of a school-chapel were laid in George Street, and the building opened in 1816. In 1832 school premises were built on the opposite side of the street. Not only was Bible teaching given here, but instruction in writing, this being continued in recent years. Though not in prominence of late years, the Church has the satisfaction of knowing that from it sprang Smith Street and King Street Churches, and from them have come Broadway and Ross Street Churches. Its present ministers are Samuel Ashton, Peter Sharrock, James Butland and Isaac Vernon.

OLDHAM—SMITH STREET.

Some members of George Street Church found it inconvenient on account of distance to attend week-night meetings, and a class meeting was held at the house of Samuel Shepherd, Lower House Cottage. Services followed at Abraham Tattersall's, Booth Street, Greenacres Hill, when 30 met in fellowship. Land for a chapel and school was taken in Smith Street and a school-chapel built to seat 300 people, at a cost of £300. James Firth laid the first brick, leaving his occupation as weaver



JOHN WILD.
1838—1894.

to do so, and the building was opened in 1837, J. Parkinson, of Manchester, presiding at the opening services. Two vestries were added in 1858. Oftentimes there was financial stress, and it was not until 1867 that a chapel was built adjoining the school, the stones being laid on Whit Friday, June 16th, by John Platt, M.P.,

and Alexander Denovan, William Sanderson, J. Landless and W. Lyon taking part in the proceedings. The edifice, which cost £1,250, was opened in March, 1868, along with an organ, the opening service being presided over by W. Sanderson. The next step forward was to pay off the debt of £110 on the school, which had been owing 35 years. A new school costing £2,000, of a model type, and admirably adapted for its purpose, took the place of the old building in 1885, the memorial stones being laid by S. R. Platt, J.P., Benjamin Dyson, James Firth, and John Wild. In 1892 it was enlarged by the erection of a gallery, a lecture hall, etc., incurring an expenditure of £300. Since then the Chapel has been modernised, its interior area enlarged, the ground floor raised and re-pewed, and a new organ, costing £430, placed in the gallery. The chapel was re-opened on December 4th, 1904, William Brimelow preaching special sermons. Like other Churches, it has had difficulties to surmount, but there have been seasons when there was a flood tide of the Spirit. Notably was this the case in 1879, when Robert Berry, the then Connexional Evangelist, conducted services, and over 100 were converted. Many remained steadfast, and are



SMITH STREET.

numbered among the workers of to-day. Abraham Tattersall, one of the founders, died in 1887, aged 82, having given 50 years' labour to the Church. James Firth, who died in his 81st year, likewise had a record of 50 years' service, going to his reward in 1889. Then there was John Wild, who ably served the Church as a minister and in many capacities. Though he was only 56 when he died he could look back on 40 years' devoted labour to Church and school. The Church, in James



JAMES FIRTH.
1808—1889.

Firth, gave the Connexion its first Treasurer, and John Wild acted as Secretary and Assistant Secretary. In the present Superintendent of the school, John Firth Wood, the Connexion has its present Financial Secretary. In 1879 the Annual Meeting was held at the Church, and this year it welcomed the first of its kind meeting.

OLDHAM—KING STREET.

In the early part of the year 1854 unpleasantness led to a number of teachers and scholars leaving George Street Independent Methodist School. The teachers being concerned for the welfare of the scholars, began to look about for a place in which to gather them. An upper room at Henshaw Street was engaged, but they did not establish a school. Some difficulties being removed, they decided to purchase a Sunday school. A building at Bank Top, which had been built for a Sunday school, but which was disused, was taken for twelve months, and was opened on November 5th, 1854, the formal opening taking place on November 20th, when William Sanderson, of Liverpool, preached two sermons. At the close it was announced that the collections had realised £30. An attempt was made to purchase the place from the trustees, but they refused to sell. It

was then decided to build a new place, and land was taken in King Street. The first stone was laid by Alexander Denovan, of Glasgow, on Whit-Friday, 1855. The estimated cost was £1,100, towards which £100 was given or promised.

The new building not being ready on the expiration of tenancy, services were held in the Temperance Hall, Horsedje Street. The opening services of the new Chapel were held on December 23rd and 30th, 1855. At this time



KING STREET.

there was only one room, with a gallery over the entrance. In 1858 a floor was put in, and the lower portion used as a school. Shares having been taken in a building society, the earliest years were a continued struggle to meet the payments, but faith in God helped on the cause, and by the aid of friends the tradesmen's accounts were punctually paid.

Many alterations have been made at considerable expense, much more having been spent than the original building cost. God has abundantly blessed and through the friends He has raised up, all debts have been paid, and four

adjoining houses purchased at a cost of £600. The building not being convenient, and deficient in class rooms, it has been decided to erect a new chapel on the site of the four houses, at an estimated cost of £3,000, towards which a sum of £1,400 is now invested, including a legacy of £218, bequeathed by a former teacher, John Buckley.

Twice the Annual Meeting has been held here.

The following persons were the principal movers in the establishment of the cause: John Nield, John Dronsfield, George Hardman, Benjamin Lees, Abraham Crompton, John Wolfenden.

John Coops, Samuel Moss, Walter Garrett, William N. Moss, and Zaccheus Nield, the two last being the only survivors.



JOHN NIELD.

OLDHAM—BROADWAY STREET.

This Church had a humble origin. Several brethren, including Benjamin Dyson, Daniel Isherwood, and Robert Harrop, met for Christian fellowship in Noble Street. They were visited by William Sanderson, who suggested that they should have Sunday services. A cottage in Boston Street was obtained and opened for preaching in May, 1879. Next year a plot of land was taken in Broadway Street, and the memorial stones of a school-chapel were laid by James Firth, Master Bamber (Bolton), William Boote (Liverpool), and Sister Cotton. In September, 1880, William Sanderson preached the opening sermons. Fresh Sunday school accommodation was provided in 1903, Richard Green, one of the ministers of the Church, opening the extension. Benjamin Dyson, who laboured devotedly for

the Church, was Connexional Treasurer, and when he died in February, 1894, was President of the Connexion. This bare recital of the external growth of the Church is a reflex of the increase of membership and scholars.



BROADWAY STREET.

OLDHAM—ROSS STREET.

The latest off-shoot of Independent Methodism in Oldham is the Mission Church at Ross Street. At the Circuit Meeting, December, 1893, William Brown was asked to take the superintendency of the cause, with the assistance of his son, James H. Brown. They laboured together for some time without any sign of success. The rent of £30 a year was found very heavy to bear, and in June, 1898, the

Circuit decided to purchase the building for the sum of £500. Towards this £200 was raised, and in 1899, the place was secured upon the Model Trust Deed. The organ belonging to King Street was presented to the Mission, and erected in the upper room. The services have since been better attended and some brought into fellowship.

Oldham Circuit has three Chapels, one Mission station, 415 members, 1,263 scholars, 123 teachers and officers, with property valued at £10,050.



ROSS STREET

GLASGOW CHURCH.



THE earliest records of this Church bear the date 20th February, 1820.

On March 16th of that year, a meeting was held to consider what steps should be taken to form an Independent Methodist Church at which "a letter was read from our brethren in Newcastle," and consideration was given to the kind of office-bearers necessary, and how they should be set apart for their work: also the reception of members, and the observance of the Lord's Supper.



GLASGOW CHURCH.

On the 23rd March it was decided that the officers should be Pastors, Teachers (Class Leaders), and Deacons; that those who satisfy the Church should be received into full Communion; and that the Sacrament should be dispensed with tables. A week or two later the Church nominated the following as pastors:—Robert McPherson, John Hutton, George Lashley and Alexander Denovan; Teachers, William Anderson, John White, John Flockhart, and John Kincaid; Deacons, John Virtue, John White, William Anderson, John Flockhart and William Jenkins.

On Thursday, 6th April (the sacramental Fast Day in the city), the names of those nominated were placed before the Church, and John Kincaid's added as Deacon; all were duly elected. The recorded invocation at the close of this service is as follows:—"O dreadful and Merciful Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! make Thy people thankful for conducting them safely and lovingly thither. And now look down from heaven and work in and by these unworthy and insufficient but willing servants for Thine own Name's sake!"

The first meetings of the Church were held in Candleriggs, and afterwards in Shuttle Street. In 1822, they entered into possession of premises in Low Green Street which they had previously purchased. In 1831, they resolved to take down part of the buildings and erect a new Church with premises for a school, to be leased for seven years by what was called the Infant School Committee. While the new erections were in process, the Church worshipped in the Lyceum Rooms. In these new premises the Church continued till 1862, when, having purchased property in Charlotte Street, they erected another Church, and this was occupied till November, 1895, when the property was sold. The present Church is situate in Robson Street, Govanhill, one of the newer districts of the city, and was erected in 1896. Alexander Denovan, for 60 years a minister of this Church, was well known to the English Churches, as he served the Connexion as President, Secretary and Editor.

BOLTON DISTRICT.

BOLTON—FOLDS ROAD.



GEORGE WINTERBURN.
1805—1884.

FOLDS ROAD Church ranks with the first and foremost of our Churches. It is linked with those who founded Independent Methodism in many ways. From the Church has come men who have had wide sympathies, constructive ability and the spirit of service. In the early years of the 19th century, strivings after religious and political liberty stirred the minds of men, and Wesleyan Methodism having the oligarchic spirit, from which John Wesley could not shake himself free, had to bear the

shock of Democracy. The result was that, like at Bolton, little bodies were dashed off and filled with the spirit of a freer life.

History records that one Thomas Hill, a superintendent minister in Bridge Street Wesleyan Circuit, Bolton, had a stronger hand than a wise head, and so during his ministry in that Circuit in 1819 he lectured the society members on

the support of the ministry, struck their names off class registers with little ceremony, and treated their political opinions as contemptuously as he knocked the white hat—a symbol of Radicalism in those days—from a table at a Leaders' Meeting. Ten men, therefore, left the Bridge Street Society and, like the early Christians, formed a Church in a house. John Fallows, one of their number, opened the cottage where he resided in Morris Street, off Turton Street, for the brethren, and there they met for the first



BOLTON—OLD FOLDS ROAD.

services in February, 1820. These men were John Fallows, Noah Draper, Joshua Fallows, Henry Foster, Hugh Horrocks, Joseph Rothwell, Henry Rothwell, Richard Vickers (whose youngest son, also named Richard, now aged 76, is the oldest member of Folds Road congregation to-day) Thomas Waddington, sen., and Samuel Wood. Their number grew, and from the beginning they were in touch with Independent Methodist preachers at Leigh, Warrington and Manchester. The Society reported to the Annual Meeting in May, at Sheffield, the same year, and

formed one of 18 Churches, of which that meeting had cognisance. Twelve months later the little company had so grown that a room in Grime Street was rented, and there, a report of the period says, "there came to preach some who are willing to be imitators of Jesus, and do what they can without fee or temporal reward." Whilst in Grime Street they were joined by a body of members and teachers from Ebenezer New Connexion (now Christ Church), who came out as a protest against the minority



BOLTON—NEW FOLDS ROAD.

ruling the majority. A Chapel in King Street, formerly used by the Baptists, was then occupied for worship, and public services held there.

In 1822 there arose upon land in Folds Road, where there had been a public-house bowling green, a chapel and school, which were opened on the first Sunday in 1823, the morning preacher being Peter Phillips, of Warrington; afternoon, Mr. Redson, of Leeds; evening, Mr. Stephenson, of Newcastle. The cause in its new premises grew. It had political opposition, as its nickname then of "Radical

Chapel" indicates; it opened its doors to the first Temperance Reformers, when locally these men were suspected of being infidels; and it met the prejudice of those who considered the Church an assault upon the paid ministry. Like most Churches, too, it did not escape internal troubles. The cause was nearly wrecked in a struggle between the lessors of the land and those who, in 1833, determined to have the property put upon a trust deed. Those



JAMES VICKERS.

1822—1879.

for a trust deed won. Again, in 1849, a few seceded and started a cause in Bury Street, which flickered out in a few years. But there were many true men and women, and so the cause grew. A second storey was put on the school, the chapel was re-seated and galleries taken all round, and an organ took the place of the stringed instruments.

Modern requirements swept the old schools away in July, 1871, and in that year a new school was erected upon the site at a cost of £2,000, George Winterburn laying the corner stone on September 23rd. The chapel, rich in sacred memories, was taken down in 1888, and the memorial stone of the handsome new edifice (costing £3,000) was laid by W. Brimelow, on Saturday, July 14th. Joshua Hudlass, over 40 years a preacher here, preached the first sermon in the new chapel on February 17th, 1889.

From the Church and schools have gone those who, like William Fallows and George Booth, have done good work in America, and shared in the development of the free life of that great country. Other denominations in Bolton have had in their membership those who were not ashamed to point to Folds Road Church as having given them their bias for Christian work; and the Town Council has had many recruits from those who were led to public service by

their training here. In political and social life, though not among the "great of the earth," members of this Church have ever been prominent in bringing their Christian influence to bear upon the problems of the time.

In the old days the school premises were rented for day school purposes, and in the Sunday school writing was taught down to 1860. Nearly 40 years ago a band of men—Peter Lomax, Joseph Settle, Alfred Roscoe, Robert Entwistle, Joseph Haslam, and Kellett Ashton voluntarily taught evening classes to help the young people. The educational spirit was there, and when the new schools were erected they were opened for day schools and subsequently transferred to the management of the Bolton School Board, until that Board erected a school to take its place. Some of the earliest scholars of the day schools became schoolmasters, and one of them, F. Wilkinson, is now the Director of Education for the County Borough of Bolton.

The Sunday school has had a noble order of men for its Superintendents,

and we are able with the assistance of the late S. Rothwell's "Memorials of Folds Road Chapel," to give the following list: 1837, G. Winterburn; 1838, E. Chadwick; 1840, Thomas Bramwell; 1841, T. Bramwell; 1842, G. Winterburn; 1843, Johnson Lomax; 1844-5, G. Winterburn; 1846, J. Lomax; 1847-84, G. Winterburn; 1885-6, Josiah Ryder; 1887-91, W. Brimelow; 1892-3, D. Howarth; 1894-5, R. Cunliffe; 1896-8, W. J. Ambrey; 1899,



R. ENTWISTLE. 1836-1898.

H. Brimelow; 1900-2, W. J. Ambrey; 1903-4, J. Ryce; 1905, D. Howarth. Associated with George Winterburn, as vice-superintendent, for 18 years was the late James Vickers, and Robert Howarth was vice-superintendent for nine years.

Nine times—from 1824 to 1893—the Church has welcomed the Annual Assembly. The Church, as already stated, owed a debt to the early preachers connected with that Assembly, and in return has given loyal service. From the Church has come two Presidents—Peter Thornley (1828) and W. Brimelow; four Connexional Secretaries, Joseph Mallison, R. Roberts, James Vickers and W. Bamber; a Connexional Treasurer, George Winterburn (a financial pillar in those days); four Bookroom Secretaries, Robert Entwistle, Joseph Settle, Daniel Howarth and H. Brimelow, and Connexional Editors in W. Brimelow and his sons, Richard and James. A list of ministers since 1821, subjoined, will rouse many memories.

James Greenwood.	J. Fell	Joseph Ormrod.
William G. Burns	Joseph Entwistle.	William Crumble-
Peter Thornley.	R. Ormston.	hulme.
John Mallison.	James Parry.	James Lomax.
Charles Atherton.	Nicholas Rigby.	William Bamber.
John Settle.	John Baynes	James Vickers.
Thomas Waddington.	R. W. Roberts.	William Brimelow.
Robert Hodson.	John Riding.	Alfred Roscoe.
John Kay.	Matthew Rigby.	Robert Cunliffe.
Henry Rothwell.	Henry Rothwell.	R. B. Woods.
Hugh Horrocks.	John Roberts.	Thomas Lomax.
John Wood.	Joseph Holden.	Joseph Settle.
Thomas Waddington,	John Sharples.	W. J. Ambrey.
jun	Henry Fallows.	D. Whitehead.
Richard Livesey.	W. Riding.	Richard Brimelow.
Joshua Kay.	Thomas Haslam.	F Wilkinson.
John Lawson.	Johnson Lomax.	James Brimelow.
Thomas Bramwell.	James Burton.	H. Brimelow.
Henry Russell	Matthew Wilkinson.	E. Horsley.
R. Todd.	James Pendlebury.	M. B. Disley.
K. Greenhalgh.	Joseph Armit.	H. Holt.
J. Greenhalgh.	Henry McManners.	C. Brimelow.
Thomas Booth.	Joshua Hudlass.	

BOLTON—NOBLE STREET.

In 1868 Folds Road Church was moved to commence a Mission in Great Bolton, several of its members residing in that quarter of the town. A room was rented in Blackburn Street, and on May 24th, 1868, the opening services were held, the preachers being James Lomax and Joshua Hudlass. There were six brethren: William Crumble-hulme, James Lomax, Robert Entwistle, George Boardman,

Akkey Bamber, and William Brimelow, deputed to conduct the mission, and the first five gave active service. In 1871 the Church had a sad loss by the death of George Boardman (whose son is now school superintendent), he meeting with a fatal accident. The five brethren had soon associated with them: A. Roscoe, John and James Crumblehulme, S. Hilton, F. Brooks, S. Orrell, James Vickers and J. Foster. To these must be added Elizabeth Holroyd, who has laboured in season and out unceasingly. Removing from Blackburn Street, services were held in Bolton Moor Temperance Hall, and a new chapel and school were occupied on November 17th, 1872, the corner stone of the chapel having been laid



BOLTON—NOBLE STREET.

on the previous Good Friday by William Crumblehulme. W. Sanderson preached the opening sermons, and again he visited the Church in 1874 to open an organ. In November, 1874, a day school was opened, and six years later (1880) another storey was put upon the school, soon after which the day schools were transferred to the management of the Bolton School Board, which authority rented the premises until about two years ago. A further extension took place in 1896, when a gallery was erected in the chapel, and a new organ placed in it, an expenditure of £700 being incurred. James Vickers preached in the morning and A. Roscoe in the evening on the occasion of the re-opening on October 4th.

The Church welcomed the Annual Assembly in 1877 and

again in 1888. During their ministry at Noble Street, William Crumblehulme and Alfred Roscoe were Presidents of the Connexion, and the latter also held various Connexional offices. The Church still maintains a vigorous life, and is practically out of debt, with property worth £5,000.

WESTHOUGHTON—WINGATES.

Like that of Folds Road, the Church at Wingates was founded by men who were in sympathy with the spirit of progress. The Wesleyan Superintendent Minister, probably the same who caused friction in Bolton, was frankly told by some who attended the Wesleyan Mission at Lostock, that their "politics were a part of their religion, and, if he did not like it, they could do their own preaching and praying." The crisis came when these men attended the famous gathering at Peterboro'. They left the mission and in 1819 rented a cottage up "The back o'th Square." Here they opened a Sunday school where the three R's were taught and regular services conducted. Peter Phillips often walked over from Warrington to preach for them. They were known as Quaker-Methodists or Singing Quakers. The leading men in those early



WESTHOUGHTON.

days were William Bradshaw, George Hodson, E. Basnett, William Kirkman, Joseph Adamson, Joseph Bateson, John Fell, Joseph Sale, William Ferrar, Paul Monks, William Rigby, E. Morris, Robert Bamber, S. Kirkman and Joseph Hart. Five of them were returned as ministers 70 years ago. A new chapel was built in the Square and opened in 1835 by Peter Phillips. As a building it was a splendid monument of self-denial and manual labour by devoted men and women, but the gallery had been constructed flat instead of sloping. One of the brethren on his own responsibility had the front of the gallery lowered. Discord set in: the brethren had not been consulted, and the result was that for about three years there were two Independent Methodist Chapels, but ultimately a reconciliation took place. Some 40 years ago the Church was near extinction, but three faithful women were true, and they deserve honourable record—Alice Cowburn, Ann Heyes and Mary Thornley. William Crumblehume, then resident at Horwich, walked from there to Wingates week after week, and devoted himself to building up the Church, which is so prosperous to-day. In 1871 a new chapel was erected in Dixon Street, James Cooke laying the memorial stone. In 1877 a schoolroom was added, and there followed a further extension of the school in 1888, a day school having been commenced two years previously. Subsequently an infant school was added and this year a further extension of the school premises is taking place. All along, with this Church men have been identified who have been the foremost in the township in all progressive movements. In the stormy days of the Chartists and the early days of the Temperance Cause, its members faithfully stood the brunt of persecution. It has been loyal to the Connexion, and of recent years two of its preachers have served on the Connexional Committee—Joseph Bateson and Edward Ralphs, the present Evangelistic Secretary. As a Church it ranks high with the other Nonconformist Churches in the locality, by whom its leaders are esteemed. Its oldest minister, Joseph Bateson, has the joy of five others with him in the Ministry, all of whom have been under his influence since childhood.

HORWICH.

Whilst William Crumblehume was resident in Horwich, he originated in 1862 a Sunday School and public preaching service in a cottage near to Crown Square, Lee Lane, being determined that the Gospel should be feelingly preached in the village, and that a place should be built

where total abstinence could be advocated." He was ably assisted at the commencement by Thomas Hopkins, Thomas Battersby and others. He also was aided by Folds Road Church, and soon the Co-operative Hall had to be rented to meet the needs of the school and congregation. A school chapel was erected in Lee Lane, the late Councillor James Lomax, of Farnworth, laying the corner stone, in May, 1867, and the building was opened in September of the same year. Times of stress came to the Church owing to removals. Mr. Crumblehulme himself



HORWICH.

having returned to Bolton, and in 1877 it was feared that its "chequered career" might terminate. At this juncture a group of Congregationalists joined the Church, including R. Crowther, the present school superintendent, and since then there has been continued progress. On September 6, 1884, William Crumblehulme and William Brimelow laid the memorial stones of a new school adjoining the first building, which was re-seated and furnished for public worship, at a cost of £1,000. In March, 1885, the new and altered premises were opened, and sermons preached by James Lomax (Bolton) and Joshua Hudlass. In 1886,

the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company established works in Horwich, which caused the population to spring up in a few months, from about 4,000 to 12,000, and the Church determined to provide day school accommodation. A day school was opened on August 4th, 1887. It was full in six months. Another new school building, of which the memorial stones were laid by W. Crumblehulme, Benjamin Dyson, T. Battersby and John Laithwaite, on September, 22, 1888, was erected at a cost of £1,300. Continuous annual efforts have been made to reduce the debt upon the buildings, and it is hoped soon to extinguish it, so that the old school chapel can be taken down and a larger edifice erected to accommodate the congregation which now uncomfortably crowds the present chapel.

FARNWORTH.

So far back as 1822 there was a preaching station at New Bury, and again in 1853 it is recorded that services were held at Halshaw Moor (the old name for Farnworth) in which Independent Methodist ministers assisted. The present Church, however, dates from 1861, when William Rose, John Collier and James Tong (the first two having laboured at



FARNWORTH.

Pendleton Church) commenced a class meeting at the home of Bro. Collier. Bro. Sharrocks then opened his home for a preaching service, a room afterwards being taken. By the assistance of Folds Road friends a larger room in Ellesmere Street was secured in 1866, and three years later this was superseded by a school chapel in the same street. The corner stone was laid by Thos. Haslam, of Folds Road Church, and was opened on November 28th. For a time it was found convenient for the Church to be in Manchester circuit, but 18 years ago it again joined Bolton circuit, and the present generation, with W. A. Hindley as a faithful preacher and leader, have gone forward. A new school was built in 1896, and the older building renovated and pewed for public worship solely. The Church has suffered considerably through emigration of families to America, but is still full of vitality.



ALFRED ROSCOE.
1844—1902.

ATHERTON.

This Church had a humble beginning. A man, Jackson by name, opened his cottage in Morley Street (Walk Lone) in 1877 for meetings, and the Stringer family—John, Joseph, and Ephraim, all earnest workers still—were in the first group of labourers. Then a smithy was obtained, and alterations made at a cost of £50. To outsiders the cause was known as the Working Men's Mission, but among themselves as the "Owd Rock." The original group was joined by some Primitive Methodists and they desired to

attach the mission to that body, but the late John Knowles, of Lymm, and others, were asked to explain the principles of Independent Methodism, which won the suffrages of the majority. In 1885 the Church was received into the Connexion and a new school chapel was erected in Mealhouse Lane, the corner stone being laid on August 15th, by John Taylor, a Wesleyan Methodist resident in the locality. These premises were affected by the workings underneath, and it was decided in 1897 to erect a new building in the rear. The building is a handsome structure, and services are being held here until a new chapel is erected. The Church has had a varied congregation, chiefly of the collier class, and many notable trophies of God's grace are recorded in its history.

BOLTON—CHALFONT STREET.

Folds Road is rightly styled the "Mother Church," and in 1886 she sent out those who have founded the Church at Chalfont Street, in the northern part of the town. The locality was fixed upon as needing a new religious centre and because there were many Independent Methodists resident in the locality. Folds Road furnished the first instalment of the Building Fund by holding a bazaar, at



BOLTON—CHALFONT STREET CHURCH AND SCHOOLS.

which £570 net was obtained. A school-chapel, the corner stone of which was laid on Good Friday, 1886, by Joshua Hudlass, was first built. The building was in two storeys, the upper one being used for public worship for the first time on Wednesday, September 8th. Six brethren had been drafted from Folds Road Church for twelve months, viz., Joshua Hudlass, Josiah Ryder and George Ryder to superintend the Church, and Thomas Mainwaring, John Howarth and Joseph Worsley for the school. They had the pleasure of seeing on the first morning the school opened 70 scholars and officers assembled. So remarkable was the growth of the cause that it was resolved to build a chapel on a site adjoining the school, and Josiah Ryder laid the corner-stone of the edifice on Good Friday, 1888, and it was opened on Wednesday, October 10th, of the same year. In October, 1893, a corner-stone for three additional vestries to the school was laid by Joseph Worsley. When a new organ was placed in the Chapel on April 3rd, 1895, the premises were fully equipped for its sacred purposes. The organ cost £435, and a bazaar realised £423. A goodly group, over 20 in number, including Josiah Ryder and George Ryder, David Reekie and Frederic Wilkinson, left this Church a little over two years ago to help in founding Beverley Road Church. Recently the Church has lost the services of Joseph Worsley, for many years superintendent of the school, through his removal to Blackpool. Happily the Church has been able to sustain the removals necessitated in the case of the brethren named by changes of residence, and is continuing its good work. The total cost of the buildings is £4,400, and there is a present debt of £1,100. It may be added that whilst a minister at this Church F. Wilkinson ably served the Connexion for several years as Connexional Secretary.

RADCLIFFE.

It is now twenty years since this cause began. A few people, of which the present School Superintendent, J. Sandiford was one, were drawn together in Mission and Temperance work, and they formally organised themselves on Christmas Day, 1885, in the Good Templar Hall, Green Street, and as the cause progressed meetings were held in the Co-operative Hall. In the meantime help had been given them by the Bolton Churches, and our mode of working having been explained to them by James Vickers, the then as now District Secretary, it was decided to become connected with the Independent Methodist

Churches. A migration was made to a room in King Street, Stand Lane, where splendid mission work was done. After much consideration it was determined to build a School Chapel, in Bridgefields Street, and the six memorial stones—two by W. Brimelow and John Crumblehulme—were laid on May 14th, 1892, amid much rejoicing. The building, which will accommodate 500 scholars, was opened on December 7th by R. Lee, of Wigan. The Church, through removals and other causes, has had an uphill struggle, but the outlook now is very hopeful.



RADCLIFFE.

CHORLEY.

Men and women who had been stirred to stem the tide of intemperance banded themselves together and as a Gospel Temperance Mission Band did splendid service for Chorley. A Temperance Hall was built by their efforts in Hill Street in 1887 and here services were held on Sundays. Eventually a Sabbath School was instituted and the workers found it desirable to have the aid of others for the Sunday services. The Crumblehulme family whilst residing in Chorley had conducted a Mission there and kept themselves in touch with the religious and temperance work of the town after their removal to Bolton. It was to them the leaders of the Temperance Mission turned, with the result that the Mission became affiliated with Bolton district, and the Church which was formed was received into the Connexion in 1890. The Sunday school grew, and it was eventually determined to leave the Hall, which is in the centre

of the town, and erect new premises in a new and growing district. Therefore, on Saturday April 30th, 1898, the present substantial structure was built. It has a central hall surrounded with classrooms, and will accommodate 600 scholars and 500 of a congregation. Stones were laid by R. Lee (Wigan), K. Ashton (Chorley), James Crumblehulme (Bolton), W. Brimelow (Bolton), and T. Gent (Chorley), the latter, along with W. Bateson and W. Walton, having been among the foremost workers. Since entering upon the new premises a new organ has been placed in the hall, and the Church shows every sign of life and usefulness.



CHORLEY.

BOLTON—HIGH STREET.

The fourth Church in Bolton had its inception in 1801. A number who had attended Noble Street but withdrawn, on November 30th, formed a Mission Church with vest first in Bowker's Row. Within a month from this date a Sale of Work was held at which £40 was raised. A site for a Chapel and Schools was secured in High Street, and on May 20th, 1893, three memorial stones were laid by John Crumblehulme, Akkey Bamber and James

Crumblehulme. The opening services were held on Sunday, February 4th, 1894, W. Brimelow preaching at the first service. The Church was received into Connexion the same year. Early in the history of the Church, its organist (Alfred Crumblehulme) died, and the members of the Crumblehulme family placed stained glass windows in the edifice to his memory. Mrs. Crumblehulme had previously given an organ to the Chapel, and on this being removed into the School in 1896, a larger instrument, costing £400, was given by Mrs. Crumblehulme, and it was opened just before her death on June 28th, 1896. The electric light has since been installed in the Chapel, and



BOLTON —HIGH STREET.

though the Church has lost some of its early workers through death and removal, the spirit of earnestness, which has erected property at a cost of £3,500, and established a Church and Sunday School, still prevails. The Church has had the pleasure of seeing one of its preachers, John Crumblehulme, succeeding, like his father, to the post of President of the Connexion, which he ably filled for two years.

BOLTON—BEVERLEY ROAD.

So far there has been recorded the history of individual or Church efforts to found Churches. Beverley Road Church represents the combined efforts of all the Churches

in Bolton District, and particularly those of the four in Bolton. There has been for the past decade a growth of the feeling of solidarity in the Circuit which had expression in responsibility being taken for loans obtained by Churches, by a loan free of interest, and by Atherton having grants from individual Churches for its building fund. Halliwell Lodge Estate, a residential suburb recently opened up, and on which 1,500 houses are being built, was selected as a locality for a joint extension enterprise. On Saturday, August 31st, 1901, the memorial stones were laid by Mrs. R. Entwistle, Miss Gowanlock (for T. Wilkinson, J.P.), and William Crumblehulme, Alfred Roscoe and George Ryder, trowels being presented to them by F. Wilkinson, K. Ashton, Joseph Worsley, J. W. Rigby (Westhoughton), and J. Vickers (District Secretary). The School was opened on June 9th, and the Chapel on September 17th, 1892, W. M. Musgrave, J.P., performing the ceremony. The four Bolton Churches had representatives on the Management Committee appointed

THE INDEPENDENT METHODISTS'

PREACHERS' PLAN,

IN THE BOLTON CIRCUIT,--A.D. 1836-7.

IN THE MORNING, AND THE EVENING, AND IN THE EVENING, WITHOUT NOT THINE HAND.

PREACHERS			
1. J. L. Smith	10. J. P. P.	19. S. G. G.	28. D. C. C.
2. T. W. W.	11. R. T. T.	20. J. L. L.	29. J. H. H.
3. H. H. H.	12. W. W. W.	21. J. V. V.	30. J. J. J.
4. J. J. J.	13. R. R. R.	22. L. C. C.	31. J. L. L.
5. J. P. P.	14. J. W. W.	23. S. S. S.	32. J. D. D.
6. J. B. B.	15. H. H. H.	24. J. C. C.	33. P. V. V.
7. J. H. H.	16. S. S. S.	25. J. K. K.	34. S. H. H.
8. J. T. T.	17. J. T. T.	26. J. T. T.	35. W. F. F.
9. J. A. A.	18. J. P. P.	27. D. E. E.	

L. COVEFEAST. S. SACRAMENT. C. CHURCH MEETING.

A. H. HOLDEN, PRINTER, BEE-HOUSE-LANE, BOLTON.

to commence the Mission, these being : Folds Road, C. Latham and R. Howarth ; Noble Street, J. Carr and T. Battersby ; Chalfont Street, G. Ryder, and D. Reekie ; and High Street, W. W. Crumblehulme. They were joined by others who resided in the locality, and the Church has already 73 members. John Carr became President of the Church, with F. Wilkinson, vice-president ; D. Reekie, Secretary ; C. Latham, Treasurer ; G. Ryder, Superintendent of the Sunday School ; R. Howarth, Vice-superintendent ; with S. Lomax, Secretary. The total



BOLTON—BEVERLEY ROAD.

cost of the building was £5,000, towards which there was a grant of £100 from the Connexional Extension Fund, a grant from the District of £150, and the individual subscriptions ; a district bazaar and a sale of work at the Church itself, made altogether £1,500, leaving a debt of £3,500. It was arranged at the District Meeting, held on December 8th, 1903, that the Church should assume the responsibility of self-government, taking a debt of £3,000, and the District to meet the other £500. At the Liverpool Annual Meeting in 1904, the Church was received into full Connexion, George Ryder having the honour of being its first representative.

Bolton District has eleven Churches : 1,240 members, 3,544 Sunday School scholars, 367 teachers and officers, and property valued at £35,300.

WIGAN DISTRICT.

WIGAN—GREENOUGH STREET.

LT was the Society founded at Wigan some eighty years ago that gave the first impulse to the spread of Independent Methodist principles in the Wigan district. The idea which seems to have originally engaged the support of the early leaders was that of a Church on mutual co-operative lines—each contributing freely to the work, and each receiving of its advantages—and it was in their devotion to this purpose that the society, after a series of migrations, decided to build a school chapel in 1829 upon

THE INDEPENDENT METHODISTS' PREACHERS' PLAN, OF THE WIGAN CIRCUIT.

"When I say unto the wicked, O, wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity—but his blood will I require at thine hand." Ezekiel xxi. 3.

PREACHERS									
And Public Speakers									
1	George Hodgson	2	James Adkins	3	John Maitland	4	John Smith	5	Hugh Horrocks
6	Thomas Heywood	7	John Heywood	8	John Heywood	9	John Heywood	10	John Heywood
11	John Heywood	12	John Heywood	13	John Heywood	14	John Heywood	15	John Heywood
16	John Heywood	17	John Heywood	18	John Heywood	19	John Heywood	20	John Heywood
21	John Heywood	22	John Heywood	23	John Heywood	24	John Heywood	25	John Heywood
26	John Heywood	27	John Heywood	28	John Heywood	29	John Heywood	30	John Heywood
31	John Heywood	32	John Heywood	33	John Heywood	34	John Heywood	35	John Heywood
36	John Heywood	37	John Heywood	38	John Heywood	39	John Heywood	40	John Heywood
41	John Heywood	42	John Heywood	43	John Heywood	44	John Heywood	45	John Heywood
46	John Heywood	47	John Heywood	48	John Heywood	49	John Heywood	50	John Heywood
51	John Heywood	52	John Heywood	53	John Heywood	54	John Heywood	55	John Heywood
56	John Heywood	57	John Heywood	58	John Heywood	59	John Heywood	60	John Heywood
61	John Heywood	62	John Heywood	63	John Heywood	64	John Heywood	65	John Heywood
66	John Heywood	67	John Heywood	68	John Heywood	69	John Heywood	70	John Heywood
71	John Heywood	72	John Heywood	73	John Heywood	74	John Heywood	75	John Heywood
76	John Heywood	77	John Heywood	78	John Heywood	79	John Heywood	80	John Heywood
81	John Heywood	82	John Heywood	83	John Heywood	84	John Heywood	85	John Heywood
86	John Heywood	87	John Heywood	88	John Heywood	89	John Heywood	90	John Heywood
91	John Heywood	92	John Heywood	93	John Heywood	94	John Heywood	95	John Heywood
96	John Heywood	97	John Heywood	98	John Heywood	99	John Heywood	100	John Heywood

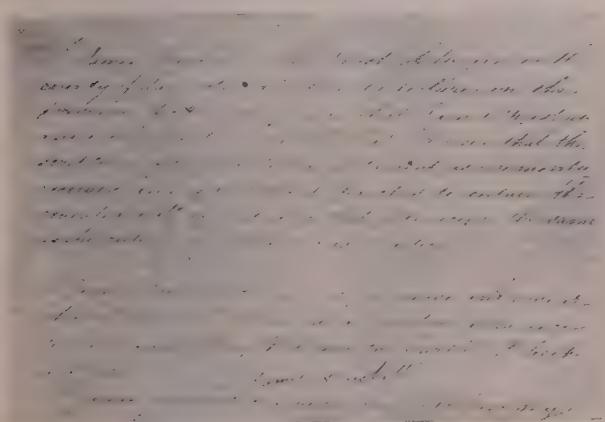
the site still occupied by the present Church and school in Greenough Street. A plain pulpit, deal forms without backs, with a few writing desks (used for the purposes of instruction in the barest elements of education) was their only recognition of the exigencies of accommodation. But the success of the venture was backed by a corresponding advance of enthusiasm, until increasing numbers offered a wider prospect, and gave a deeper meaning to the policy and aims of the Church. A conspicuous trait of the period was the method of celebrating the Lord's Day.



JAMES TRICKETT.
1812—1883.

Commencing with a seven o'clock Prayer Meeting, the friends found cheerful occasion for three assemblies in Divine Worship, and two meetings of the Sunday School, making it a day of joyous service that was invariably concluded by united prayer. The appreciation of the mission of the Church was not, however, confined to these agencies, and the duty of proclaiming the Gospel was also made to rest upon the devotion of the individual member. It was in this spirit that Gospel Services were conducted for work-mates during the hour of dinner relief, and open-air meetings

held in the scattered villages of the outlying district. Therefore, in 1839, there was not only a comparatively strong Church at Wigan already discussing ways and means of extension, but an organised circuit consisting of the following places:—Wigan, Billinge, Winstanley, Wingates Temple, Daisy Hill, Ashton, and Lamberhead Green. It is, however, only as we recall the conditions which obtained with the members, recruited entirely from the class of miners and factory operatives, during this period, that we are able to appraise the true character and extent of the labours from which the different churches have come. With the narrow limitation of social and



JAMES TRICKETT'S LICENCE.

economic opportunity during this period we have fortunately no occasion to treat as it belongs to the much wider facet of social circumstance which still vivifies the public controversies of to-day. But the sacrifice entailed by these conditions was not more irksome than the religious antagonism which then prevailed. Nothing is more apparent in the memoirs of these days than the suspicion which attended the work of the brethren. The preaching of Independent Methodist principles provoked a storm of controversy and criticism of which for the most part it may be charitably affirmed that the meaning seldom equalled the sound. One lesson, however, which the brethren learned about this time was that preaching could only be under legal sanction, and several of the brethren in

consequence of their ministerial duties were required to take the oath of loyalty to King William, and obtain licences as ministers of the Protestant Faith. The licence granted to the late James Trickett is now in the possession of his son, Joseph Trickett. It is to men thus influenced that we must look for the secret of that rapid growth of Independent Methodism which seem to offer at this time a promise of expansion that has only as yet been partly realised. The old Chapel, with its sacred memories, was taken down in 1880, when the foundation stones of the present Church were laid by the late James Proe and J. G. McMinnies, M.P. Three of its members have held at different times the high office of Connexional President (James Proe, Thomas Worthington, and Richard Lee), and it has taken no inconsiderable part in the development of the Wigan Circuit. The Church has received the Annual Assembly on four occasions. First in 1835, next in 1841 (when William Sanderson entered on his faithful work in our Connexion), and then in 1858 and 1892. The policy of the Church has been consistently missionary from the first, New Springs, Ince, and Kendal Street having been largely formed by members in previous association with the Church. The total cost of the premises is



GREENOUGH STREET.

estimated at £3,000. and the buildings are entirely free of debt. With a membership of 150, and a Sunday School that is inconveniently crowded, there is a feeling of confidence in the prospective development of the cause by the strong element of young life associated with the work.

LAMBERHEAD GREEN.

This Church dates from 1835, when meetings were commenced on the green of what was then a small village.

Amongst those taking part were George Hodson, James Proe, and James Trickett, of Wigan; and James Gardner and Henry Anderton, of Billinge. When favourable the services were held in the open air, and on one occasion when James Trickett was preaching he was peremptorily told by the churchwarden of the parish to desist. The preacher, however, was able to produce his licence (a curious document to read to-day) to preach, granted by a magistrate, and the warden walked away exclaiming, with an oath, that "all such persons ought to be put into gaol." After a time a room was rented over a public-house belonging to James Brown (grandfather of Sister Pigot), and he was so influenced that he gave up his licence to sell intoxicants. As the cause grew, more suitable premises were provided in two cottages in Carr Lane, and ultimately a school-chapel was in 1860 erected in Fleet Street. In 1887 a chapel was built on land at the rear, but facing Loch Street, and in 1895 the school-chapel was pulled down and larger and more convenient premises built for the Sunday school. In 1903 an organ recess was added to the Chapel, and a new organ, costing over £350, was placed therein, the musical service at this Church always being of a hearty and reverent character. Amongst the first workers



JAMES PROE.
1825—1900.

and adherents were Mr. and Mrs. Derbyshire (grandparents of Thomas Worthington), Mr. Brown, James and Mrs. Sharrock, and later on Thomas and Elizabeth Pigot (three of whose sons are now in active service in the Church), Mr. and Mrs. Worthington, Joseph Rylance and James Robinson.



LAMBERHEAD GREEN.

The Church has now over 100 members, and the property is valued at over £3,500.

DICCONSON LANE.

The Church at Dicconson Lane was founded in 1858 by William Hartley, Joseph Gregory, Thomas and Peter Boardman, Edward and William Young, James and Esther Leigh, and Nanny Butler, who left the Wingates Church to commence services in the house of James Leigh. They

were encouraged to go on with the work by a number of remarkable conversions, among others that of the late Richard Bond. With commendable zeal they directed their efforts towards securing a permanent centre for the work, two Anniversary Sermons being held in what was locally known as Noble's Barn. In 1861 the foundation stone of a new school was laid by James Trickett, of Ince, and with the greater scope thus obtained many were added to the numbers of the cause, notable among these being Richard Lee, Matthew Kennedy, George Hall and David Bond. A Church was erected in 1867, but owing to a variety of causes had to be entirely rebuilt ten years later. The



DICCONSON LANE.

Church has suffered in recent years from the stoppage of several local industries and the consequent removal of many families from the district. A sum of £1,235 has been expended upon the premises, leaving a present debt of £223.

PLATT BRIDGE.

The Society at Platt Bridge originated about the year 1866, when a good Christian worker named Richard Hilton came to reside in the district, and formed an intimate friendship with a few of his neighbours who were unable to read or write. He volunteered to teach his friends and

suggested the formation of a Sunday School, to which they gladly agreed. About this time a camp meeting was held at Warrington, under the auspices of the Friar's Green Church, and to this meeting Richard Hilton went accompanied by J. Eatock, J. Barrow, H. Eatock and Richard Green. The visit led them to confer with several friends connected with the Bolton and Wigan Circuit, and a camp meeting was held under their advice which proved a memorable time, many conversions taking place. The cottage which had previously been used for a Sunday School only, was now made to serve for preaching services and the following year a school chapel was erected. Much progress has since been made, and the foundation stones of a new and commodious building for aggressive work were laid in 1903, and the structure was opened this year.

WESTWOOD.

The history of Westwood Church dates from about 1871, when cottage meetings were held in Kay's Houses. The Church has struggled on against adverse conditions. In the earnestness of the present leaders and the firm stand which the Society is making for the principles of temperance, there appears a much brighter prospect before the different agencies of the cause. The cost of the original building was £600; the debt now remaining to the Church is nominal, being more than balanced by properties in its possession.

PEMBERTON.

The idea of the founders of the Pemberton Church was to establish a cause in an entirely new district, and in 1871 a site was chosen at a considerable distance from any other place of worship. The growth of the cause soon determined the leaders in obtaining more land, and the subsequent development of the district has more than justified the hopes of the founders, the Church having one of the finest sites in the Wigan district. On May 12th, 1894, foundation stones were laid of a new school, which has brought the value of the premises to a total of £2,000. Of the men who were responsible for the starting of the cause special mention must be made of Joseph Ryland and Thomas Anderton.

HIGHER INCE.

In 1876 a number of brethren residing in Ince and in membership with the Wigan Church thought the time opportune to commence a cause in that district. The names of the friends associated with this effort were as follows: James and Joseph Trickett, Joseph Stott, Thomas Simm, John Bates, Edward Caldwell and William Liptrot; W. Murray shortly afterwards joining the Church. A school chapel was built in 1878, the cost of which, including subsequent additions, amounted to a sum of £700. In March, 1903, the present Church was opened, the total



INCE.

expenditure being £1,760. The present condition of the Church offers every encouragement, the returns showing seven ministers and eighty-nine members.

SPRING VIEW.

The formation of a Church at Spring View was chiefly due to the initiative of the late Robert Berry, of Swinton. Acting upon his advice a cottage was taken by the circuit in the centre of the village, and the inside walls

having been removed, services were held therein until the present Church was opened in 1880. In 1806 the foundation stones of a new school were laid, to cost £800. Prominent among the early workers were J. and R. Cleaton, J. Talbot, J. Molyneux, J. Barker, Shepherd and J. Davies.

NEWTOWN CHURCH.

This Church commenced at the beginning of 1880. A number who had been connected with the Wesleyan Methodists desired to work under a system of self-government, so they rented a cottage and held services. In a few months they determined to build a school-chapel, the memorial stone of which was laid by William Boote, of Liverpool, on September 4th, 1880, and the opening services were held on January 30th, 1881. Much financial difficulty has been encountered, but this has been now overcome, and a new building is in contemplation. The membership of the Church is 70.

BRYNN.

Brynn Church commenced on October 19th, 1880, with a meeting in the house of John Cockbill, who with Peter and John Pilling, William Myers, and Thomas Whittingham resolved to erect a wooden building to seat a hundred persons. This building was opened on Sunday, November 12th, 1880, the preacher being W. Lyon, of Southport. The second building was opened on the second Sunday of November, 1885, two large classrooms having been subsequently added.

STUBSHAW CROSS.

The Stubshaw Cross Church was opened in 1854 by the Warrington Circuit, preaching services being held in the house of the late Ralph Tunstall, who became the superintendent of the Sunday School, and one of the leaders of the Church. The Church was erected in 1857, and for a time the place enjoyed many occasions for thankfulness in the continued success of the work. Upon the death of Ralph Tunstall in 1875, the society entered upon a period of depression. It was transferred from the Warrington to the Wigan Circuit: the condition of the cause being such as to lead to the premises being offered for sale. Of late years there have been many evidences of the recovery from these unfortunate conditions, and the Church has a roll of 41 members, with 100 scholars in attendance at the Sunday School.

WIGAN—KENDAL STREET.

Kendal Street Church was built as a Circuit Mission, several of the Greenough Street members being drafted to the new cause. Memorial stones were laid on the 2nd April, 1898, by James Langton, John Melling, James Proe, Will Woods, William Burton and John Crumblehulme. The Chapel was opened on Saturday, August 20th, 1898, by Mrs. John Dalton, after which a public meeting was held, presided over by the Mayor of Southport, Alderman Booth. On Sunday, August 21st, sermons were preached morning and evening by R. Lee.



KENDAL STREET.

HINDLEY MISSION.

The opening of a Mission Hall at Hindley marks the development of an entirely new feature in the evangelistic policy of the Wigan Circuit. The district meeting, having

agreed upon the practicable advantages of a forward movement, instituted inquiries as to the best outlet for aggressive work in the large and growing township of Hindley. As the result of careful investigation a centre was chosen in the midst of a working-class population, and operations were commenced by a series of open-air meetings, a canvas tent being procured on September 1st, 1901. Crowded meetings gave effectual testimony to the appreciation with which the people received the simple preaching of Gospel truth, and many were reclaimed from the evils of intemperance, who are still in active association with the work. With the advance of autumn came increasing strain upon



HINDLEY.

the resources of accommodation, the question being brought to a decisive issue by a gale of wind which carried away the whole equipment, and necessitated the erection of a wooden structure provided by the Circuit, at a cost of £170. In August of last year memorial stones were laid of a new Mission Hall. This building was opened in November, at a cost of £900, and will accommodate 350 persons.

Wigan Circuit has now 13 Churches and one Mission, with 905 members, 2,976 scholars, 316 teachers, and property valued at £18,405.

NEW SPRINGS.

FORTY years ago a number of the members of the Church at Wigan resided at New Springs, and the distance being considerable, cottage meetings were started in several of the members' homes. There was at that time no place of worship there, the nearest being the Parish Church of Haigh. An effort was made to form a Church here. In 1859 services were held in a small building, which was used as the village day school, taught by one Dame Molyneaux, and for the modest sum of 2s. per week arrangements were made for the use of the place for a Sunday school and a mid-week service. Our aged members refer with pleasure to the memory of this building, so packed with worshippers that it was found necessary to adjourn to the garden and there hold the services in the open air.



NEW SPRINGS.

The demand for room was so imperative that after some two years a new Church was decided upon after much prayer by the few who assumed the lead. Notably amongst these were James Trickett, Henry Hackett, Thomas James, Joseph Lancaster, Henry Whitmore, William Tickle, Ralph Eckersley, and James Chivers. The work of these friends was beyond all praise, and a building was reared in the autumn of the year 1861, at a cost of some £650, towards which the Kirkless Hall Coal and Iron Company, now the Wigan Coal and Iron Company, contributed £100. The late William Pickard, Miners' Agent, then a member of the Wigan Church, also took a deep interest in the building.

The foundation stones of the present edifice were laid by Thomas Ashton, of Wigan, in what was then a beautiful field of waving corn, and thorn trees had to be cut down to mark out the site. The needful enlargements and alterations from time to time have been both numerous and costly, and more than £2,000 has been spent. The Sunday School has been a power for good, chiefly under the superintendency of Thomas Lancaster for nine years, Ralph Eckersley for nine years, and Peter Kenyon for more than 23 years. Our Church members number 68, with eight on trial, and we have seven ministers. Our school has 240 scholars, with 24 teachers.

STOCKPORT.

The Church at Stockport dates back at least a hundred years. It does not appear to have taken part in the meeting of 1806, but we find it represented at the Annual Meeting of 1808 by Gamaliel Swindels and Peter Ashley. Gamaliel Swindels was one of the leaders of the denomination in its early years, and played an important part in it. He appears as President in 1830. Peter Ashley was Connexional Secretary in 1810 and 1811, and President 1813 to 1815, and again in 1819 and 1823. The prosperity of the early years of the Church's history has not been maintained; but those who know its long history will join in the hope that the future may witness a revival of the work in the important Cheshire town.

HAZEL GROVE.

Closely associated with Stockport in the cause at Hazel Grove, which has encountered the many difficulties common to village Free Churches. We may hope that here also the future will bring prosperity and increased usefulness.

LIVERPOOL DISTRICT.

LIVERPOOL—ELIZABETH STREET.

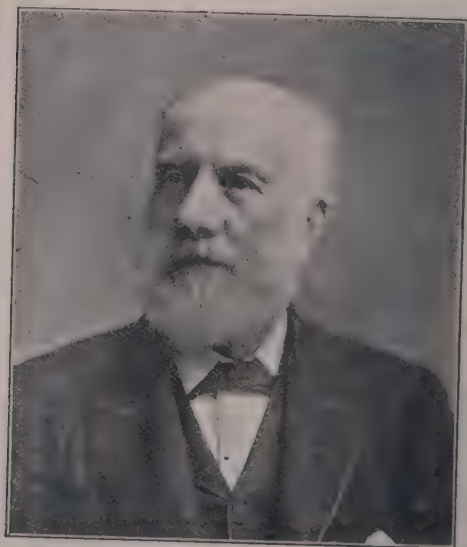


WITH the history of this Church is bound up the history of Churches in Liverpool district. It was born in the mission spirit, and has never been content if not manifesting it. When William Sanderson was led in 1839 to seek a freer mode of Christian service, he along with others preached in the open air and large congregations were generally attracted. Eventually land was taken in Great Charlotte Street, on which a small building, called the Tabernacle, was built at a cost of £128. At the opening services held on August 30, 1840, William Wallworth, of



ELIZABETH STREET.

Manchester, preached. There were many remarkable conversions, and amongst those won to Christ were Richard Sanderson and James Davenport. Both became zealous workers and the latter an acceptable preacher. Previous to this period the founders of the Church had become acquainted with the Church at Warrington, and on a statement of Independent Methodist principles being sent them by Peter Phillips they rejoiced to find that there were other Churches with their views and methods, and so the Church decided to join the Connexion. This was done at Wigan



WILLIAM BOOTE.

1834—1900.

in 1841, William Sanderson then entering upon the work which God afterwards enabled him to do for the Churches associated with the Annual Meeting. In 1845 it was necessary to have more commodious premises. Land was bought in Elizabeth Street, and upon it was erected the building now used as a school. The memorial stone was laid on March 5, 1845, and the cost was £800. Peter Phillips preached at the opening service on August 30, 1845. Soon after the building was opened, Elizabeth and Diana Skelton joined the Church, and were the means of bringing the majority of their family into membership.

Again, in 1820, it was found necessary to increase the accommodation, and a small gallery was placed at the end of the School-chapel at a cost of £28, members giving their labour. In 1837 the gallery was carried all round, and the roof was raised on screw jacks six feet, £200 being spent. Vestries were added in 1862. Eight years later another venture was made, property adjoining was purchased and taken down, and the first stone of a new Chapel laid on May 28, 1870. It cost £2,200, and was opened on December 23rd of the same year. In after years the facade of the chapel was altered and stained glass windows put in at a cost of £205. Of the disinterested labourers in this Church during the 75 years of its existence must be placed



REUBEN MORTON.

1821—1895.

foremost William Sanderson, whose memory is revered not only in Liverpool but throughout the Connexion. Then there are James Lea (who died at Montreal), J. Davenport, Shaw, J. Isterling, W. H. Ward, W. Boote, J. Dodd, W. Dodd, J. Whitehead, A. Buttress, T. Barkley, J. L. Ellis, and many others. W. Sanderson was several times President of the Connexion, William Boote also filled that position, and Jasper Isterling was Connexional Secretary one year.

As already stated the Church has ever evinced an evangelistic spirit. Prescott was first visited in 1850, and there is now a Church there. In 1850 a cause was commenced at Daniel Heath's house, from which has come Tetlow Street Church. In 1807 a small chapel was built at Maghull, but some men proved unfaithful and it had in a

few years to be sold. Jasper Isterling and William Boote in 1881 missioned Little Neston. A mission room was opened, but the work had to be given up owing to the cessation of employment at the colliery. The work was not, however, in vain, for some of the friends went to reside at St. Helens and St. Helens Junction, and helped to form Churches there. Upper Beau Street was also carried on as a mission, and has now grown to a church and school at Cochrane Street. A successful mission is also being carried on at Cerney, three miles from Wrexham. A piece of land has been bought and a mission hall built. The Church has also helped the causes at Crewe, Chester, Lancaster, Haydock, etc.

HAYDOCK.

The cause originated at Haydock about the year 1858, and was commenced by William Brown and family in a cottage at Delph Row. Later the meeting place was removed to Park Road, more in the St. Helens district, but only for a brief period. Afterwards we find the Church holding services in a cottage in Blackbrook Road quite close to the present building. Much interest was manifested in these services by the leaders, James Garner, Peter



HAYDOCK

Lyon, William, Farrakerley, and William Jackson, who had the partition wall of the bedroom removed and a flight of stairs erected outside. Prosperity attended the services, the workers being joined by such worthy pioneers as William Lawrenson, William Longworth and Thomas Croston. A step further in advance was made in the purchase of a small building from the Roman Catholic bury, by the side of the canal, where many souls were brought to a knowledge of the truth. The Church continued to worship here until the accommodation became inadequate. A piece of land was secured and the present Chapel erected, the opening services being held in December, 1897, under very favourable circumstances. Most of the old pioneers have passed to their reward, but the spiritual life of the Church is better than ever in its history, and the Church is making its presence felt most favourably in the district.

LIVERPOOL—TETLOW STREET.

This Church owes its origin to the circumstance of the late Daniel Heath and his family taking up their residence in Tetlow Street in 1832. Prior thereto they had been associated with Elizabeth Street Church, and were disposed to continue the association, but the distance was found to be too great. The formation of a new Church was suggested by William Sanderson, and ultimately a service was held on Sunday afternoons in the kitchen of Daniel Heath's home, the neighbours being invited to join the family at the meetings. When the weather permitted, open-air services were held on some vacant land close by.

Freehold land was purchased in Tetlow Street, and the foundation stone of a Chapel laid by William Sanderson on December 26th, 1850. Architecturally it was of a modest type, as the building, including land, cost only £200; but much labour was bestowed gratis by willing hands, the internal fittings being done by our late William Sanderson, J. Rigby, D. Heath, and James Firth, of Oldham, who journeyed hither to assist the brethren in their labour of love.

God signally owned the preaching of the Word; and wonderful conversions took place.

In 1863, two school vestries were built. Again, in 1868, the building was extended to almost double the size of the original, at a cost of £131 10s. This arrangement provided for Church and school purposes in the same room.

but in the year 1875 a School was erected at the rear of the Church at a cost of £222.

A house adjoining was purchased in 1877, which, with the Chapel, gave a frontage to Tetlow Street of 45 feet and a depth of 39 feet. The Chapel and house were taken down and the present building erected thereon at a cost of



TETLOW STREET.

£1,400. The opening services were conducted by William Sanderson, on November 15th, the same year.

In the year 1892 it was found necessary to again extend the school premises, and the enlargement was carried out at a cost of £350. Again, in 1903, 200 yards of land were purchased at the rear of the school; the old school premises were taken down, and the present premises erected at a cost of £1,500. In 1894 the Church had the pleasure of entertaining the Annual Meeting.

LANCASTER.

The earliest records of this Church are dated 1825. Towards the end of the year 1824 a difficulty arose in the Wesleyan Church consequent upon a demand that class pence must be paid under a penalty of expulsion. Work was scarce and moreover was badly paid for, causing much poverty, and the rule rigidly enforced by the minister estranged some of the class leaders, whose sympathies were with the poorer people. Naturally a large proportion of their members followed them when they decided to secede. Arrangements were quickly made for the continuance of two fellowship classes, and the records show that 27 persons formed the new society. We find that as early as May, 1825, the young community was in communication with the Quaker Methodist Church at Warrington relative to methods of Church government. The information obtained from Warrington was used as a basis for the constitution of the new Church. At first rooms were hired for the meetings and preaching stations appointed at Caton Wray and Quernmore. Shortly afterwards the membership increased to 55 and a third class was arranged. In 1829 the new chapel was built and Independent Methodism permanently planted in the town, but unfortunately the preaching stations had to be relinquished one by one. The Annual Meeting was held at Lancaster at the Whitsuntide of 1849. About 60 years ago William Sanderson began his connection with the Church, and paid it frequent and regular visits for a period of 50 years, and to the last his visits never failed to arouse deep interest and enthusiasm. The late wife of John Thompson (who was 26 years president of the Church) used to recall her first meeting with Wm. Sanderson then a straight, slim, black-haired youth as he slipped from the packet from Liverpool. Samuel Fitzgerald, for many years a member of this Church, was editor of the Connexional Magazine. The present Church is the one originally built in 1820, but extensive alterations have been carried out at various times, including the installation of an organ some years ago. Funds have been accumulating for some years for a new place of worship, when probably the present building will be wholly used as a school. It is hoped the Church, which has kept alive the principles of Independent Methodism in Lancaster, will receive new inspiration and under the blessing of God make more definite progress.

LIVERPOOL—COCHRANE STREET.

This Church commenced as a mission from the Elizabeth Street Church, in 1870, when a room was rented over some stables in Upper Beau Street. The mission was the outcome of the missionary spirit of a prosperous Church, which desired to spread the knowledge of the Gospel in a neighbourhood promising success for the work of Independent Methodism.



COCHRANE STREET.

Two brethren were appointed to take charge of the place and work it, and their whole-hearted efforts were speedily blessed with success. Removal by death and other circumstances called for repeated changes, Messrs. Garner, Tayle, McClure and Horton in succession being called upon to take the responsibility of the leadership. By these the work was carried on with considerable success for some

time, but it gradually declined through being too confined, and it became evident that the mission must control its own affairs and be conducted as a separate Church.

This arrangement was completed on April 3rd, 1887, and apparently gave the society a new lease of life. A Building Fund was formed, the services improved, and for a long time conversions were recorded week by week.

The Sunday School, always successful, continued to grow, and a more suitable place for work among the young people, became a necessity. This led to the purchase of the present site and the erection of a chapel, with basement school, which was opened in December, 1899, at the cost of about £1,600. Successful work continues and stability increases.

THATTO HEATH—ST. HELENS.

The Church at Thatto Heath was the result of a desire on the part of a few good men to help the people in that neighbourhood. Help was sought and obtained from the Church at Elizabeth Street, and a mission was at once commenced in 1881; and in 1889 a Building Fund was started and a piece of freehold land secured, whereon the present building was erected in 1892, at a cost of £650. The Church has since passed through many vicissitudes, and it has been found difficult at times to sustain the cause, but the present year finds it striving after progress and hopeful that the near future will bring greater prosperity.

ST. HELENS—HAMER STREET.

This Church started in 1885 by a series of cottage prayer meetings, conducted by Thomas Davies and Jacob Spash. In the course of a few weeks a wooden shed was hired for public services, in the name of the Church. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining preachers because of the principles held, and a deputation was sent to the church at Prescott to seek advice. They supplied preachers for one month, and the Warrington District for a further two months, when the Church became associated with the Liverpool District. William Sherrington and family came from Skelmersdale about this time and rendered good service. The cause prospered, and the hired shed speedily became too small. Land was bought in the same street, and a building erected in 1886 at a cost of £579. The opening services were conducted by William Sanderson in March, 1887. Some time later a difficulty arose about trustees, and the Church

practically ceased to exist. But the spirit of Independent Methodism survived, and two years later William Cox, T. Davies, William Sherrington and J. E. Spash, re-commenced public services. William Boote and Thomas Backhouse were invited by a Church meeting to obtain the chapel again, and the same was secured on the Model Trust deed. The years which followed have been strenuous ones and much patience has been needed. All the agencies of the Church are in a flourishing condition.

ST. HELENS JUNCTION.

To narrate the history of this Church it is needful to travel back to Neston, a colliery village in Cheshire. A Church commenced there in 1881, and did good work. In 1884 the colliery was closed and the workpeople were scattered. Two families, who removed to St. Helens Junction, opened a cottage, on the advice of Robert Rimmer, for services, and the first meetings were conducted by Jacob Spash of St. Helens. When the cottage became too small, a wooden building was secured. This was superseded in 1891 by the present Church, which was opened for worship by William Sanderson. During the present year this building has been the scene of a remarkable revival. There is a good Sunday school of 180 scholars and the future looks bright indeed.

ISLE OF MAN—RAMSEY.

This Church was founded on October 25th, 1892. Its formation was the outcome of a difficulty in the Primitive Methodist Society in connection with the erection of a new Chapel. When the Primitive Methodist Society moved into its new Chapel in Parliament Street, the old building in Chapel Lane was offered for sale by public auction, and Mrs. Crinnell (a former member of Folds Road Church, Bolton), bought it on behalf of a number of the members of the Society. The deed of conveyance was received on Saturday, October 18th, 1902, and on the following Sunday the first services were held, J. Martin, J. J. Cormode and R. W. Fargher being the preachers. Twelve persons joined as members, officers were elected, ministers appointed and a Sunday school organised. The principal founders were: E. Skillicorn, J. J. Corlett, H. Hurcomb, J. Bell, R. W. Fargher, T. Crowe, J. Callister, J. J. Cormode, D. Crinnell, E. Corkill and Jas. Coslett.

On October 31st, 1892, it was decided that the Society should be called an Independent Methodist Church, and one of the rules adopted was that no member should hold the office of president for a longer period than twelve months, "so as to prevent any sentimental claim to continuance in office and to combat any priestly assumption to rule the Church." It was not, however, until 1894, that the Church joined the Connexion, there being then 40 members. On New Year's Day, 1895, it was decided to acquire the premises, and on the purchase being made they were placed on a trust deed, the Model Deed being altered to conform with the Manx law. Considerable alterations were made internally and externally, more than £300 being expended. The Church property is now valued at £500. The membership is 55 and ministers eight.

LIVERPOOL—GOODISON ROAD MISSION.

This vigorous Mission Church owes its origin to the Church at Tetlow Street. The date of its formation was 1898. In that year the mission building was erected at a total cost of £900. The neighbourhood is thickly populated, and willing workers were found to begin the task of evangelization. Some truly wonderful results have followed upon their efforts. The Church soon became a centre of spiritual life and influence, and remarkable conversions have taken place. A Sunday school has done good work among the young, and already the building is much too small for the large numbers who crowd to hear the preaching of the Gospel.

Liverpool district has now ten Churches and one mission, 525 members, 2,239 scholars, 185 teachers and officers, and property valued at £13,465.



THE YORKSHIRE CHURCHES.

THORNHILL EDGE.

INDEPENDENT METHODISM at Thornhill Edge dates from a few years previous to 1842. Services were conducted in two cottages successively, each of which became too small, but July, 1842, witnessed the opening of the first permanent building—a school chapel. Sunday school work was then taken up and efforts to win the young were put forth. Among those who rendered valuable service may be mentioned Richard Grace, John Holgate, John Crompton, David Ramsden and Joseph Senior.



THORNHILL EDGE.

Thornhill Edge in those days, though beautifully situated on the sunny side of the hill, was depraved in morals, and earned for itself the unhappy title of "Sodom." The Sundays were given over to dog and cock fighting, to man fighting and racing, gambling, &c. Within a few yards of the Chapel there existed a cock-pit. The influence of the Church has contributed largely to a transformation such as few villages have known. The inhabitants need no other argument for the purifying and energising power of the Gospel than the history of the village during the last 70 years. In 1865, to meet the increased need for room, efforts were made for a larger building, which resulted in the opening of a commodious chapel in 1868. In 1902 this building had become so dangerous that a new building scheme had to be entered upon to provide for the Church's safety and need. The chapel was taken down, enlarged and rebuilt, to provide accommodation for about 420 persons. This building was opened on April 30th, 1904, by George Hunter. A new Sunday school was erected in 1881, at a cost of more than £600, which, with the chapel, ground, etc., is valued at £2,600.

BATLEY.

In the year 1840 a number of men and women, who had previously been in communion with the Methodist New Connexion, banded themselves together and formed an Independent Methodist Church at Batley. For a few years the Church and congregation met in an improvised building—the upper rooms of two cottages being made into one by removing the partition—which was locally known as "Stump Chapel." The earnest, faithful labours of the Church were owned and blessed of God, and it became imperative that better accommodation should be provided. The need was met by the building of a chapel in Providence Street. The foresight of the leaders in their choice of a site is now manifest as this part of the town is now one of the most populous. The Chapel had not been long completed when an addition had to be made to meet the growing needs.

In those days the Church evidently believed in propagandist work, for at one time no less than five mission bands were at work in different parts of the town. Many happy memories are cherished of those happy, prosperous days. Among those who were in "labours abundant" may be mentioned J. Fearnside, J. Ineson, W. Hobart, J. Parcell, I. Burnley, J. and A. Hey, D. Preston, J. Hirst, etc.

The still growing needs of the Church had to be provided for by the erection of the present Chapel and Sunday School in Cambridge Street, the foundation stone of which was laid on the 14th July, 1883, by the then Mayor of Batley, G. M. Hurst. The building was opened for public worship on May 1st, 1884. Accommodation for 350 was thus provided with a Sunday School underneath the Chapel. The Church has had its periods of struggle and discouragement, and latterly the losses by death have been serious and have reduced the workers.

CLECKHEATON.

The Church at Cleckheaton was established in 1845. The founders of the Church were Joseph Spencer, Joseph Walker, Joshua Blamires, William Birkby, Thomas Holmes and Joseph Holmes, along with their families. The Church was established in a room in Northgate, engaged



CLECKHEATON.

for the purpose. Outgrowing the hired premises, it was decided in 1847 to build a school chapel on the site now occupied by the present Chapel. Zeal and enthusiasm marked the building of this chapel, and its history shows the untiring energy of these spiritually-minded men and the claim it had upon their time and purse.

In 1867 the chapel was somewhat enlarged, and the Church made progress therein. Though there was a debt of £200, to meet its increasing needs the Church decided in 1874 to build the present school and Church, &c., at a cost of £1,775. The new building was opened for worship 22nd September, 1875. Of its work much might be recorded, but it is sufficient to say that many have been made better through its ministry. Mission work has been a characteristic of the Church and the Temperance question has always been to the front. Other denominations have benefited through the efforts of the Church.

FLOCKTON.

The introduction of Independent Methodism into the village of Flockton was through a series of cottage meetings and services. These cottage meetings were owned of God, and in order to meet the needs of the growing numbers the chapel was built. The foundation stone was laid by the late Joseph Spencer, of Cleckheaton, in October, 1852. The opening took place in May, 1853. Among those who zealously laboured for the cause of God here may be mentioned, T. Jebson, J. Roberts, S. Taylor, J. Hepworth, J. Mountain, W. Shackleton, G. Burnley and W. Moulson, with their wives and families. The membership in 1853 was 40. The Church's growth has not been commensurate with the work put forth through these years owing to its unfavourable geographical position. The village is situated some miles from any business centre, and families have had to remove on account of work. The seed sown has been carried far and wide, and men and women who received instruction and divine enlightenment here have been the means of blessing to other Churches and Sunday Schools. Almost immediately on the opening of the chapel, Sunday school work was entered upon and has been carried on continuously up to the present. The School was built in 1886. Though contending with the disadvantages of its geographical position, the future Church is, as the past has been, fraught with blessing.

DEWSBURY.

The founding of the Church at Dewsbury dates back to 1845. The cause was commenced in a hired room in Huddersfield Road, where it was continued till



DEWSBURY.

1860. A school-chapel was opened in that year in Thornton Street, the site of the present chapel, in which Sunday School teaching and preaching were maintained. In 1873, the chapel was rebuilt and enlarged. From the meagre records kept, evidence is found which shows that all the days of the Church's existence have not been of the brightest. Lovefeasts were frequently held which were times of spiritual enjoyment, and many were the testimonies of God's unfailing love and power which were told. The preaching of faithful men has been owned and blessed of God to the salvation of many who rejoice still in His mercy and favour.

The temperance cause has for many years been kept to the front. Funds are at present being raised towards a

new building. The present premises have been clear of debt for many years.

The Church is situated in the midst of a large population and the future has promise of great blessing and usefulness.

BINGLEY.

During the Chartist Agitation in 1848 Independent Methodism had its commencement at Bingley. The meetings were held in a cottage for the first four years. Prominent among its founders were:—H. Greenwood, S. Neal, S. Cawley, F. Barker, C. Brown, B. Sharp, and J. Wilson. The work under the blessing of God grew, until in answer to the cry "Give us room that we may dwell," the first chapel was built in 1852 at a cost of £250, and with seating accommodation for about 200. After about 16 years' successful work this chapel was inadequate for the Church's needs, and the present chapel was built in 1868, providing 600 to 700 sittings. The property is now worth about £3,000. The Church has passed through periods of depression, but those who toiled here have the joy of knowing that their labours have not been in vain, and "cannot be in



BINGLEY.

vain in the Lord." The Sunday School has been fairly successful and continues to grow. The Band of Hope and Christian Endeavour Society are doing good work. The Annual Meeting visited Bingley in 1896, and did the Church much good, bringing it into closer contact with the other Churches of the town.

It has been the lot of the Church and School to suffer considerably through removals. But earnest, plodding efforts have been rewarded, and it is cause for rejoicing to know that the Church never stood in a better position than it does to-day.



CHARLES SELLERS.
1827—1895.

EMLEY.

The exact date of the introduction of Independent Methodism to this village cannot be ascertained. On referring to the Minutes of the Connexion for 1863 we find the first Annual Report given, evidence that the Union was then joined. Sunday School work was entered upon about the year 1865 or 1866. Many stories of the earnest piety and zeal of the leaders of the Church in those days are still told and remembered. Though gone to rest their memories are still fragrant, and many to-day thank God for their saintly lives. Prominent among the faithful ones may be mentioned the names of W. Scargill, J. Grason, T. Firth, W. Lodge, J. Dyson, and M. Beckwith. Men of careless lives were moved by the godly influence of these men to think of their duty to God. The Church in its early days was a centre of power and its influence was felt far and wide.

The work of preaching the Gospel and teaching the Word has been continued to the present, and members thank God for instruction and blessing received here.

The year 1877 witnessed a revival which was a means of great blessing to the Church and led to the establishing of a mission at Emley Moor, but it only continued for about five years. The Chapel was re-pewed and renovated in 1887 and is at present free from debt. Earnest and steady work for God has been rewarded, and the future has promise of blessing in store. Temperance work has always been to the fore.




WILLIAM LODGE.
1830—1896

THORNHILL LEES.

In the year 1880 a band of Christian men who were desirous of understanding the position of our denomination met to listen to an address by Nathan Secker, then with our Church at Dewsbury, who explained its principles and polity. At this meeting a Church was constituted and officers appointed. The late Henry Fisher was appointed first president. A cottage was rented in Moor Road and services commenced there. The Evangelistic Committee helped the new cause by sending Robert Berry to conduct a mission, which was greatly blessed of God. The Church grew, and it soon began to be felt that better accommodation was needed to meet the requirements of the Church and growing congregation. Efforts were put forth which resulted in the building of the present school-chapel, which was opened in November, 1881.

Among the founders and earnest workers in the Church and Sunday School may be mentioned Messrs. Keyte, Fisher, Dixon, Bell, Pickard, &c. The Church is situated in the midst of a growing population.

COLNE AND NELSON DISTRICT.

ARLY training and environment undoubtedly do much to shape our mental attitude towards new problems. And, whilst Wesley, with statesmanlike outlook, tried to formulate a church polity for Methodism, his Oxford training and early ecclesiastical associations prevented him foreseeing that sooner or later, as the sense of personal responsibility became more general, there would arise a rebellion against the residuum of priestcraft he preserved for the ministers exercising spiritual oversight over the people called Methodists. That these persons, possessed of almost mediæval power, should occasionally commit serious indiscretions is not to be wondered at. It sometimes happens that men who are very devout have very narrow and rigid conceptions of their duty, and an exaggerated conception of their own importance.

BARNOLDSWICK.

These facts largely explain the initiation of our principles in the district. The honour of being first must be given to our Barnoldswick people just over the Yorkshire border. In 1839 the operatives at Barnoldswick were anything but affluent. Bread was scarce, and money even more so, and the officials of the Colne Wesleyan Circuit considered the money sent to them was inadequate. When Robert Slater, who was deputed to take the money to the quarterly meeting at Colne, placed it on the table, one of the officials expressed surprise, and intimated that it would not satisfy the requirements. The report given of this proceeding caused much grief to the members, for, poor as they were, they still retained a sterling manhood which felt keenly the slight.

The leading officials of the Circuit, instead of trying to heal the wound, added insult to injury, and eventually the strife ended in five class-leaders sending in their resignation.

These stalwarts had to look now for a place in which to worship. Cornelius-like—and rural England has produced many such—George Pickup opened his house for the purpose. This was soon crowded out, for popular sympathy was on the side of the dissentients. One of the ministers hearing of this, and finding his own Church almost empty, had the temerity to preach a sermon which has made history. The text was “Expect these abide in the ship, ye cannot



CARNOLD CHURCH.

be saved.” He skilfully manipulated his subject so as to compare the old Methodist body to the old ship, which of course was sound and seaworthy, but held out no prospect for the seceders. This caused no consternation, but rather amusement, and became the talk of the village. One of the preachers, who preached the following Sunday in the cottage found a text, which he thought would be a suitable one for a reply sermon. It was “And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there

shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but that of the ship." This, of course, delighted the people, who found that nothing serious was to happen to them, but only the "ship," and they decided to go forward. From this time, one of the places was dubbed the "Old Ship" and the other the "New Ship."

God blessed their labours, their numbers increased, and spiritual life was apparent amongst them, so much so, that they decided poverty notwithstanding—to endeavour to build a place of their own. After strenuous efforts, and many earnest prayers, many of them mingled with tears, the new Chapel was opened. It cost, in addition to voluntary labour, about £400. This was a serious undertaking in those times. It has been computed that if all the assets of all the members of the Society had been sold they would not have realized £500.

The building was opened in March, 1840, by Miss Emmett, of Cowling.

In the years which followed grave difficulties beset the Church; the period of the American War, 1862 to 1866, was one of great privation. Many still living remember having to go hungry to service on Sundays.

In 1871 we find them arranging to take down the old place, which had become too small, and build a larger. This was opened in 1872 by John Knowles and William Bamber, the cost of rebuilding being £1,100. Again in 1893 the present premises, which are most substantial and convenient, and costing £4,900, were opened.

This in its barest outline is the story of the pioneer church of this district. To-day it is in a flourishing condition and stands high in the estimation of all denominations.

Time together with the exercise of Christian forgetfulness—has softened local asperities, and all the Free Churches join heartily with our people in aggressive work for the Common Master.

NELSON—SALEM.

This, the largest Church in the Connexion, was started nearly 53 years ago. Those who commenced it felt the need of greater freedom and a longing for what Burns calls the "glorious privilege of being independent."

They rented a large room at Lane Head over one or two cottages which had been used as a hand-loom weaving place, fallen into disuse through the introduction of power looms.

With a foresight that was admirable, a plot was secured in Scotland Road, and with a roll of only 30 members they commenced building operations early in 1853.

The trustees of the first Church were John Landless, Daniel Whitaker, Richard Ord, John Stow, J. Duerden, J. Stuttard, John Poilard, Henry Bannister, T. Burrows, R. Waddington, J. Manley, J. Elliott, and John Uttley. The only survivor of this list of worthies is John Uttley, who resides at Keighley.



NELSON—OLD SALEM.

The cause of Temperance found in the members of the church some warm friends from the beginning. A Temperance Society was formed, and did service as pioneer of total abstinence for a long period, whilst most other churches were tardy in their patronage of the movement.

It will for ever remain to the credit of Salem Church that it so early recognized that drink was a foe to religion, and must be resisted.

At the end of ten years from the building of the church it was found necessary to make an extension, and its capacity was doubled at an expense of about £900.

In 1877, the lands and buildings adjoining fell into the market. With many heartsearchings and some foreboding – for they had no money – they appointed H. Bannister and J. Aldersley to attend the sale, which they did, and secured the plot and building for £1,150.

In 1879, memorial stones of a new school were laid, and the school was opened in August of 1880. The following year an elementary day school was commenced. The schools – both day and Sunday – were so successful that additional accommodation was necessary, and in 1885 the junior school was erected.



NELSON—NEW SALEM.

During the whole of the eighties steady but rapid progress was made both in roll of membership and number of scholars. There was a cry for another move forward.

The older members felt an endearing charm in the old building, but the younger men were persistent and pleaded for better accommodation in which to worship. Silently, as we found, God had been preparing all hearts for bidding



JOHN POLLARD. 1820—1895.

“ Good-bye ” to the old endearing spot, with all its charms of blessed associations—the place which had been the scene of thousands of conversions and made sacred to hundreds as the place where many a difficult soul-problem had been solved and light found.

The memorial stones were laid on March 21st, 1891, and the magnificent church was opened on April 22nd, 1893, by Wm. Sanderson. It was eminently fitting that he should take for his text “ What hath God wrought.”

NELSON—EVERY STREET.

Again, in 1897, it was felt that the sphere of usefulness should be widened. The church that is self-contained will not continue to prosper. It was thought that it was strong enough to support a mission and when the suggestion was put before the whole church, it was found that again God had prepared their hearts, for without a dissentient voice the proposal was agreed to. A site at Spring Bank was eventually selected. About £5,000 has been expended upon this undertaking.



NELSON—EVERY STREET.

COLNE—WATERSIDE.

The origin of the Cause at Waterside dates back to 1851. Previous to this time it appears on the Burnley Circuit of the Primitive Methodists. From the Minute Book of that circuit we gather that the members of this Church were much dissatisfied with the arrangements the officials and ministers made for their convenience. On March 24th, 1851, the circuit meetings petitioned Conference to give the trustees liberty to sell the Chapel "to best advantage and at once." Some thirty of the members purchased the

Chapel and took full responsibilities of the position. Amongst those who took the responsibility we find:—James Holt, Matthew Hartley, John Smith, Roger Hargreaves, Thomas Jackson, John Greenwood, John Jackson, Robert Whittaker, John Thornton, John Lord, Mrs. Lord, Mrs. Holt, Mrs. Greenwood, Elijah Hartley, Mrs. Hartley, Betty Baldwin, Ann Parker, Sarah Hartley, and Ann Barker. These struggled bravely on, having in their breasts a love of spiritual freedom, and the consciousness that God was with them. Fortunately, the Connexion got early into touch with them, and William Sanderson was a tower of strength in their early trials.

In 1879 they secured a new site and built the Chapel in which they now worship, which is free from debt.

Incidentally we may mention that the musical arrangements at one time were very primitive indeed. It seems that in the earliest days when the hymn was given out, one James Hartley, known as "Happy," whistled over the tune before the singing. Later we find that a violoncello was used to play over the tune. Then the need for a better lead for the singing was felt, and they purchased a second-hand harmonium, and Robert Crawshaw was appointed to manipulate it.



COLNE—WATERSIDE.



NELSON—BARKERHOUSE ROAD.

NELSON—BARKERHOUSE ROAD.

This society was commenced in the year 1867 by several friends who were connected with the Salem Church. The nucleus of the Church consisted of the following: John Landless, Lancelot Thompson, William Hewitson, John Pilling, John Spencer, Jos. Britton, William Brown, John Nelson, Peter Aldersley, Robert Thompson, John Shaw, Robert Brown and Thomas Cowgill. A shop on Leeds Road was rented, and service conducted and Sunday School held therein for two years. The first sermons were preached by Thomas Foulds, and James Holt. The formal opening services were conducted



JOHN LANDLESS.
1823—1888.

by James Greenhalgh, of Manchester. It is evident that the Society made rapid progress from the first, because in less than two years a chapel was erected. In the early part of the year 1869 the corner-stone of Barkerhouse Road chapel was laid by William Tunstill, of Reedyford. In connection with the building of the chapel the members worked heartily at what they could do, some taking out the foundation, others working in various ways, until eventually the Chapel was completed. The late Jas. Greenhalgh, of Manchester, opened the chapel by two sermons, on July 25th, 1869. John Knowles, of Lymm, continued the services on August 1st. Eventually the building became too small for the needs of school and church work and it was again resolved to extend. The present chapel is the result. It was opened on Thursday, July 23rd, 1885. Land has been purchased in close proximity upon which it is intended, in the near future, to build a new school to accommodate 1,000 scholars.

COLNE—PRIMET BRIDGE.

Greatly to the credit of our friends at Waterside it must be said that they had early got the true aggressive spirit within them for we find that in 1857, only six years after their own birth, they told off the late Thomas Foulds, John Taylor, John and William Duerden, Robert Hartley, George Barker, and others, to start a mission at Primet Bridge.



COLNE—PRIMET BRIDGE.

They made a beginning in a cottage in Collingwood Street. Help was also sent from Nelson. So successful were they that they opened the Chapel in Burnley Road in the following year.



THOMAS KNOWLES
1871-1901.

Rapid strides were made. The place was soon too small; hence in 1876 the present fine edifice was purchased and on Good Friday, 1877, the opening sermon was preached by Alex. Leeson. The cost was about £8,000. There stood a school, a well-constructed church is now declared complete. Since the Chapel was opened no less than three Annual Meetings have been held in 1877, 1887, and 1901.

Before entering the district town of Colne—"Colne" it is said at least has been during the Roman occupation—we must refer to the Church at

COLNE, BLAKNER STREET.

This house was constructed by C. Fawcett, G. Kent, J. Hartley and others in the past year.

Preaching services were held and a Sunday School was carried on for a short time in a rented room in Ingate, and in the following year arrangements were made for the erection of the present building in Blakner Street, which was completed at a cost of £450. The opening services were conducted by J. Knowles, A. Rostie and J. Carr.

In the year 1895 the financial condition was found to be far from satisfactory, and an inquiry revealed the fact that some assistance must be rendered or the house would suffer extinction. W. W. Butler and S. Hartley from Bethel Church, T. Hartley and E. Parker along with J. T. Ambler volunteered to attempt re-organization of the church. The

place was renovated and made quite neat and comfortable at a cost of £150. Since then a considerable number of people have received deep impressions of religious truths within its walls, and though it may not even yet appear numerically successful, only the great day of accounts will reveal the results of the efforts of good men and women connected therewith.

NELSON—BRADSHAW STREET.

The meeting at Bradshaw Street began in a modest way in the year 1883. Four friends viz:—W. H. Berry, F. Smith, H. Moorhouse, and J. Lavis, began to hold services, in what was known as Smith's Auction Room, Scotland Road. These early workers threw themselves into the work with much earnestness, the room becoming too small for the numbers attending. A site was selected, and building operations commenced. In July, 1884, the building was opened, the first preacher being the late John Higson. The cost of the building, land, &c., when completed was about £1,010. The first Sunday School, was attended by about 60 scholars.

NELSON—LARCH STREET.

About 15 years ago a number of friends from Bradshaw Street Church took upon themselves the responsibility of establishing the cause. Land was secured and operations commenced, and the building was completed and opened in August 1891. The task of organising and working the Church was entrusted to the late W. H. Berry. Afterwards John Aldersley transferred his labours from Salem to this place, and made it his home. A number of young men also lent their services for Sunday School work for a time to help to establish it firmly. The cost of the building was, about £550. The land has since been bought.

HAGGATE.

The Church now worshipping at Haggate had its origin, in 1853, in a farmhouse known as "Slack," situated about three miles from either Colne or Nelson. Soon they removed to a more convenient house at "High Sim" by which name it was known. Thither the ministers for Colne, Nelson, Burnley and more distant parts of the circuit used to travel.

The great event of the year was the second Sunday in June, when the school anniversary was held in Burwain's

Fold—a farmyard of large dimension. Thither friends from all parts of the circuit regularly came. The scene was picturesque. Under the shade of the stately beeches a pulpit was improvised in the shape of a cart, and the congregation, some sat on rude temporary benches, others on the grass, whilst the rustic swains, many of them present, from mixed motives possibly (for it was undeniably a favourite trysting place), made up the picture.

A local rhymster thus describes the scene :—

Far o'er the hills and dales away
I roamed one sunny Sabbath day.

At last before yon cattle fold,
I saw them stand, both young and old ;
And, shaded by a stately tree,
They sang the songs of jubilee.

I saw the glow on beauty's cheek,
Which city maid in vain may seek ;
No brighter bloom the rose may wear,
Than youth's gay flush, when free from care.

From yonder rustic desk I heard
The good man speak with solemn word
Of summer lands beyond the sky,
Where trees and flowers never die.

" Abide with me " was sung at last,
The sun once more was sinking fast ;
" Fast falls the eventide " was heard
By rock and glen and singing bird.

A prayer went up to Him above,
Who oft forgives, Whose word is love ;
And each one went his homeward way,
As sung the thrush his evening lay.

And may the custom long remain
To clear the heart of maid or swain,
With music sweet beneath the shade
" Of yon proud monarch*" of the glade.

One almost feels a pang of regret that the friends were so practically minded as to remove the cause to the village of Haggate, as they did in 1887.

* A stately tree that stands in the middle of the fold.

BLACKO.

The Church at Blacko began about the year 1849, under peculiar conditions. About this time a Wesleyan Preaching Room was in existence in the village. Amongst its members were William Towler, Thomas Stephenson, Mrs. Stephenson, Christopher Wood, and others.

About 1849, Messrs. Everett, Dunn, and Griffiths were expelled by the Wesleyan Conference. A certain portion



BLACKO.

of the members of Blacko Church were in sympathy with the Conference, the rest were in sympathy with the expelled ministers. Among the latter was Thomas Stephenson. A Reformed Wesleyan Church had been established at Waterside, Colne, and Stephenson had been invited to preach for them. At the quarter-day subsequently held in Colne Wesleyan Chapel he was questioned by the Superintendent Minister as to his preaching at Waterside, and asked if he was sorry for having done so.

He replied that he was not sorry. The Superintendent then informed him that he was no longer a member of that meeting. This action naturally increased the breach at Blacko until ultimately one party decided to stand aside and allow the other to work the cause. Mr. Towler and his party, advocating the old Wesleyan principles, failed to succeed. It had been agreed that if this party failed they should step aside and allow Stephenson, and those in sympathy with him, to have a trial in the same direction, the room and furniture to belong to the successful party. A number of people in the Wesleyan Church at Barrowford, amongst whom were Joseph Jackson, Thomas Blackey, Thomas Foulds, William Horsfield, William Dunderdale, and Hargreaves Horsfield, being in sympathy with Stephenson united with him in his efforts to form a Church some time about the year 1851-1852. This party succeeded, and may rightly be called the founders of the Church at Blacko, which continued to prosper until the old room became too small. About the year 1865 a plot of land was secured, and the present building erected thereon and opened for public worship in March, 1868.

BRIERFIELD.

The Church was formed in the year 1867. The friends at Salem, Nelson, felt that an attempt should be made to establish a Church in this village. The late William Widdup was deputed to organize it, and eventually he removed his business to that place, and settled down there. A cottage was rented and services were commenced, and also a Sunday School started. Salem Church engaging to supply necessary furniture and other assistance until they could manage for themselves. The present building was erected in 1870.

BARROWFORD.

The founders of this Church were members of the Church at Blacko, nearly two miles distant, who felt that an effort should be made to establish a cause in the village. In 1875 a start was made in the home of Mrs. Speak, the leaders being Thomas Blakey and Robert Horsfield. The circuit authorised the opening of a Mission Room. A site was secured in Pasture Lane at a cost of £234, and a chapel erected thereon, costing £1,000. Our esteemed friend, Jonas Sharp, has been a leader and an ardent worker in this cause from the beginning. The workers take a deep interest in all religious movements in the village, and the best of relationship exists with all the Free Churches.

BURNLEY—ROBINSON STREET.

This cause was commenced in 1862. A room was rented in Calder Street and opened for public worship. Thomas Lush, who is still living, was a preacher on the day of opening. Success followed their efforts. A chapel was built in Oxford Road, which did not prove a success and was sold, and again they went back to Calder Street.



BURNLEY.

In 1882 six of the friends who lived in the Burnley Lane district took a room in Old Hall Street. Hartley Catlow, Robert Skeath, and Thomas Whitaker were chief leaders. After six years they decided to endeavour to build a chapel, with the result that the present structure in Robinson Street was opened in 1890.

CLIVIGER.

Up to 1878 there was no place of worship in the village. A few of the members separated themselves from the Wesleyan Church at Mereclough—a village about a mile away. A room was rented, services commenced and a church formed, and they joined the Colne and Nelson



JAMES HOLT. 1809—1886.

Circuit. In 1880 the present building was opened, having cost about £700. In 1882 one of the most remarkable revivals broke out in this church. The whole village was stirred to the utmost, and about 80 people went through the inquiry room. The village has suffered through labour disputes, many of the members and scholars removing out of the district. The few remaining workers have made a brave struggle.

TRAWDEN.

In 1880 it came to the knowledge of the officials of the circuit that a class-meeting was being held in the house of Mrs. Laycock conducted by William Lee. A deputation was appointed to wait upon them. The result was that a church was formed, and the Literary Institute engaged for Sunday services. In March, 1882 the present chapel—costing £530—was opened.

HASLINGDEN.

This Church was formed in 1847. First in a room in Ratcliffe Street, then in a larger one in Pleasant Street. First under the name of Primitive Methodist, but later as Primitive Free Church, all the time working under the system of a free ministry. They then took possession of an old Baptist Chapel. In 1881 a new one was built costing £1,270. In 1897 they joined Colne and Nelson Circuit.

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE MISSIONS.

These two missions are of recent origin, and are still in their infancy.

Colne and Nelson Circuit has 1,276 members, 42 ministers, with seven on probation, a scholars' roll of more than 4,700 and a list of teachers and officers of 400, and property of a nominal value of nearly £45,000.

SOUTHPORT DISTRICT.

SOUTHPORT—SUSSEX ROAD.

IN 1860 began the movement for the Church which has now its home at Sussex Road. Richard Spencer started a class meeting at the house of William Rigby, Mount Street, and it has continued up to the present, he still keeping the position of leader. Services were held at various houses, and such were the numbers attending that open-air meetings were held. These were principally in front of the Blue Anchor, the landlord of which lent forms. He even offered the use of his music-room, but it was declined. The leaders were chiefly fishermen, and numbered amongst them William Lyon, William Rigby, John Rimmer, Richard Spencer, Samson Lloyd and John Wright. Once when Thomas Oxley was preaching outside and there was appearance of rain, he told his hearers it would not rain upon them, and though rain fell all about none came on the congregation. Dr. Goodman offered the use of his hospital for preaching services, and afterwards let them have land in Hawkshead Street, on which was built the Fisherman's Chapel in 1862. Robert Barlow and James Greenhalgh, of Manchester, and Richard Spencer were the preachers at the opening services. At first the money expended on the chapel was obtained from a Building Society, the repayments being 30s. per month. One week there was only 4d. in the Treasurer's hands, but the following Sunday the collection was £1 0s. 11d. Eventually the Oxley family got the Church out of this Building Society difficulty, and in October, 1876, a tea party was held to celebrate the Chapel being out of debt. In 1874 a number of the members of the Church commenced services at Barton Street, where there had been a little cause, and met in the houses of Peter Heyes and William Halton. Out of these meetings came the

Church at Sussex Road, land being taken at the junction of St. Luke's and Sussex Road. A school-chapel was built in 1874, and the present handsome school and chapel were erected on the same site in 1897. About the same period a portion of those who had continued worshipping in the Fisherman's Chapel joined the cause here, and the old Chapel was given up. The names of the trustees of the first school-chapel were Samson Lloyd, William



SOUTHPORT—SUSSEX ROAD.

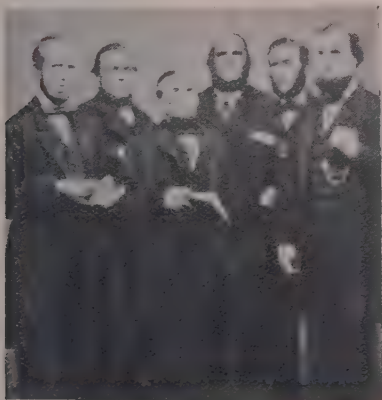
Lyon, William Wright, William Halton, Henry Hodge, Richard Johnson, Robert Howard, Matthew Kennedy, Peter Heyes, James Proe, Thomas Worthington and Joseph Trickett. The present trustees are Samson Lloyd, William Lloyd, James Sumner, William Wright, William Halton, Henry Hodge, Matthew Kennedy, R. Marshall, Richard Spencer, Thomas Lawson, Henry Kennedy, P. Lawson, William Spencer, Thomas Jones, Robert Howard, William Isherwood, R. Lunt, John Lloyd and Mark Halsall. The premises are valued at £2,000.

SOUTHPORT--HIGH PARK.



THE history of the Church at High Park, if it were fully given, would read much like a continuation of the Acts of the Apostles. Men and women have been associated with it whose means were extremely limited but whose faith in God was large and expectant. When the cause commenced High Park consisted of one lane, the present Old Park Lane where the new Church is erected, and there were a few thatched cottages scattered here and there separated by stretches of sandy soil. In April, 1868, in this uninviting neighbourhood a few of the more enthusiastic workers of the little "Fisherman's Chapel" in Hawkshead Street, led by the late William Lyon, began to hold open air services at the lane end. These services continued for some time in all kinds of weather until on one very stormy day, one of the cottagers invited the hardy evangelists into his kitchen to hold the service there. A little further away, down what is now known as Mill Lane, in a one-storied house, a Sunday school was started and some of the scholars who attended that school are with the school to-day. The friends next secured a piece of land upon which to build a Chapel and school. The foundation stone was laid on Christmas Day, 1868, amid a dense fall of snow, by William Lyon, with a borrowed trowel, and the amount collected at the stone-laying was 16s. 5d. The faith of the friends was put to the test again and again during the building operations. They made their own plans, the farmers freely carted the bricks, the women and children carried them in their aprons and pinafores to the men who built the walls after their day's work was over, and often by candle light. When the walls were partly built, the supply of bricks was stopped for want of money. The brickmaker wanted £80 and they had nothing in hand. Behind the Chapel there was a sand hole, and in spite of the cold weather the friends prayed there that the Lord would send them £80. A kind Quaker lady sent for William Lyon and gave him £70 she had collected. With this £70 he started off to pay the £80 bill. On his way he was stopped by a friend who encouragingly inquired as to what progress they were making, and then putting his hand into his pocket drew out a £10 note, which he handed to William Lyon. Thus was the bill paid and building operations renewed. On Sunday, May 9th, 1869, the opening services were held amid great rejoicings, the preachers being

William Lyon, James Trickett (Ince) and Henry Draper, of New Springs. In 1875 it was found necessary to build a school behind the Church; accommodation was thus provided in the two places for 500 people. In 1876 a day school was established and it flourished for a number of years. In 1898 the Church purchased a large piece of land in Old Park Lane, covering, 1605 square yards, on which to erect a new Church and new school. The foundation stone, of the new Church was laid on November 1st, 1902. The total cost of the building and land was £1,620, towards which sum R. Nicholson (Quaker) contributed £100, and



A GROUP OF SOUTHPORT PREACHERS.

Reading from the left the names are:—William Lyon, John Wright, William Rigby, John Rimmer, Richard Spencer, Samson Lloyd.

Mrs. Unwin (Church of England) £100. The members now number 55, scholars, 139; value of property, £2,500. It is hoped to soon build a new school, which is sorely needed.

SKELMERSDALE.

The meetings were commenced in 1884 in a hired room. The premises consisted of a double cottage, of which the middle wall had been removed. Curiously enough this building has been the cradle of all the Free Churches of Skelmersdale. When the cottages were built the owner

desired to build a chapel there, but was not permitted to do so. He therefore left the two end houses of the row without middle walls and used them as a meeting house. The Wesleyan Methodists commenced a cause there, and after their removal the Primitive Methodists. They were followed by the Congregationalists and then the Independent Methodists. The first service was conducted by William Hulton, to whom the cause owes much.

A school-chapel was built in 1889 at a cost of £500. The flooding of the collieries has led to many removals, but progress continues to be made.

Southport Circuit has now three Churches, with a membership of 128, and there are 360 scholars with 43 teachers and officers, and property valued at £4,950.



CREWE DISTRICT.

CREWE.



JAMES SLACK.

IN 1869 a meeting was commenced in Crewe by the late James Slack and a few others in a small room owned by the Co-operative Society, at which Matthew Darlington was the first to preach. Many prophesied failure from want of funds and preachers, but men were raised up to sustain the effort. William Oxley, of Manchester, an old acquaintance of James Slack, was a true friend to the cause, and in many ways gave great help. Since that time the Church has been called to pass through many vicissi-

tudes. The premises it occupied had to be given up at a financial loss and the Church is now endeavouring to raise means with a view to erecting a new chapel. Meanwhile it meets in rented premises and is accomplishing a good and permanent work.

SHAVINGTON.

For some time previous to the erection of a chapel, meetings were held with great success in the cottage of Mr. and Mrs. Gidman, who were very ably assisted by Mesdames G. Thomas, Profitt, Whittingham, Smith, and Darlington. Seasons of blessing were enjoyed, and great good was accomplished. In course of time the friends were

successful in securing, free of charge, a plot of land from Mr. Roycroft, of Acton, and built upon it the present chapel, which cost about £130. It was opened in March 1872, the preachers being R. Barlow and R. Taylor, both of Manchester.

HOOKGATE.

In 1857, a few friends commenced to hold meetings in a cottage, where under the influence of the Holy Spirit a revival broke out and many were converted. Soon after a small school-chapel was built. This soon proved insufficient and in 1881 the present chapel was built. The memorial stones were laid by Miss Tomkinson, Mrs. Furnival, George Thomas, and H. W. Hulme. The latter has stood by the cause, through many difficulties during the whole of its existence. The opening sermons were preached by Hugh Bourne, of Newcastle.

BUERTON.

This cause was commenced on farm buildings under the care of Thomas Timmis. Public and private means of grace were here heartily enjoyed, resulting in the conversion of many. The chapel was built in 1885, on a plot of land given by Thomas Timmis's landlord. It cost £280 and has seating accommodation for 150 people; also a small schoolroom capable of holding 40 children. In answer to faithful prayer a host of friends were found who were willing to assist. Horses and carts were loaned to draw materials, and a Church of England friend did the greater part of the joinery free of charge, and a son of Thomas Timmis, who was a bricklayer, built the chapel. In short, all the people had a "mind to work" in the good cause. The pioneers of the movement were Thomas Timmis, R. Sandlance, J. Woodcock, S. Woodcock and J. Shuker.

KIDSGROVE.

A mission cause has for several years been carried on in this town. Many uphill battles have been fought by the few who desired to see the prosperity of the Lord's work. Souls have been brought from darkness into liberty, and many homes have been brightened through the efforts put forth here to extend the kingdom of our Lord.

HASLINGTON.

A cause was originated in this village by Matthew Darlington, sen. (a farmer in the neighbourhood), who had for several years been active in advocating an unpaid ministry. He was joined by a few earnest souls, who were animated with a desire to do good, and who laboured for several years with great success. The chapel was built about 1868.



HASLINGTON.

MARKET DRAYTON.

This Church was commenced in 1885, its origin being the ever-recurring cause—a minister's arbitrary conduct. Six friends William Bound, John Dobson, George Ryder, James Dudley, Benjamin Blainey and Henry Robbins—all members of the Primitive Methodist Church—considered the action of the minister unwarrantable. Having first paid up the "quarterage" they struck for liberty. A room was rented at 2s. 4d. per week and their labours were blessed. Then they were led to start week-night meetings in a stable lent them by the owner, the donkey which occupied it, being tied up outside. Here the people crowded, and there were many changed lives in consequence. In 1893 the Society was able to buy two cottages in a main

thoroughfare. The members and the children gave labour to adapt the premises for a meeting place and £100 was spent in alterations.

FAIR OAK.

The Gospel was preached here in 1860 by a few friends from Hook Gate, in a house occupied and owned by John Emery, and soon a little band of men and women were gathered. A few changes led to an alteration in the village meeting place; and in 1874 a new chapel was built near the spot where the Primitive Methodists had preached many years before. The old seats and pulpit came from the chapel at Bromley Hall, a gift of E. Tunnecliffe, who was leaving the farm, and they were used until 1901. New seats and wainscoting were then put in, made out of an oak tree, felled at Gnosall, June 15th, 1892, which contained 250ft. of strong timber.

Shavington Circuit has now seven chapels, 124 members, 261 scholars, 38 teachers and officers, and property valued at £1,295.



THE NORTHERN CHURCHES.

SUNDERLAND CIRCUIT.

BETHANY.



HIS Church claims the honour of being the first established in the North. The first meeting was held at the house of the late J. F. Drinkwater, in Herrington Street, Sunderland, on the 15th of February, 1877. The minutes show that there were present:—

J. F. Drinkwater, W. Branfoot, T. Shields, W. Rutter, W. Wills, M. Wayman, and Mrs. Drinkwater, and Mrs. Branfoot. At this meeting it was decided to engage the "Albert Rooms, Coronation Street," and the order of services for the following Sunday, 18th February, 1877,



SUNDERLAND—BETHANY.



WILLIAM BRANFOOT.
1825—1903.

was arranged as follows:—10, Prayer Meeting, Leader, Myers Wayman; 10.30, Preacher, J. F. Drinkwater; 5.30, Prayer Meeting, Leader, Thomas Reed; 6, Preacher, William Branfoot. Thus the cause of Independent Methodism was started in Sunderland. A Circuit Preachers' Plan was prepared by a duly appointed committee. Of the names appearing on this plan only three are now associated with the cause of Independent Methodism, viz.: Thomas Reed,

Robert W. Collin, and W. J. Bartle. The majority of the preachers have been called to their reward. It is a pleasing feature in connection with the first Church that one of the original members, William Thompson, this year serves as its President. The early meetings were attended by remarkable success, despite the prejudice that had to be faced.

In the year 1870, the present building was purchased, and since that time has been looked upon as "The Circuit Church," the various business meetings being held here.

Soon after the cause was commenced, correspondence was opened with the Connexion and as a result a deputation attended the Circuit Quarterly Meeting on October 24th, 1877. It was agreed afterwards to join the union.

It was at Bethany Church that the first meeting of the Northern Counties Confederation was held, commencing on Saturday, May 27th, 1882. The Confederation is a union of Sunderland, Newcastle, Spennymoor and Catchgate circuits, consisting of 28 Churches and one on trial. Annual Meetings are held at Easter, and the delegates usually number from 50 to 60, and some refreshing times indeed are experienced at these gatherings.

Bethany has also twice had the honour of entertaining the Connexional Annual Meeting, the first time in 1883 and the second twenty years later, in 1903.

In the cause of Independent Methodism it may be said that no Church in the North of England has done more than Bethany. It has sacrificed largely and ungrudgingly in sending its best men to preach the Gospel and to fill the various offices of the Confederation and Circuit, &c. In addition to this the Church was honoured in the election of the late much beloved William Branfoot as President of the Connexion in 1899.

CHRISTIAN LAY CHURCHES.

SUNDERLAND CIRCUIT.

PREACHERS' PLAN, 1877.

"Small and high church, but confirmed to class of low estate." Numbers ch. 17, ver. 16.

NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	REMARKS
4 W. BRANFOT, & ALPH. AYRE			
5 J. H. JOHNSON, & VICTOR, street, Deptford			
6 W. WATMAN, Victoria street			
7 C. DICKSON, FIVE o'clock			
8 G. YOUNG, 5, High Street, West			
9 A. BERRY, 20, St. James			
10 M. C. AYRE, 45, London Street West			
11 J. H. JOHNSON, 17, 27, Harrington street			
12 T. BERRY, 15, High Street, West			
13 J. H. JOHNSON, 17, 27, Harrington street			
14 T. BERRY, 15, High Street, West			
15 W. WATMAN, 5, High Street, West			
16 J. H. JOHNSON, 17, 27, Harrington street			
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18 M. C. AYRE, 45, London Street West			
19 J. H. JOHNSON, 17, 27, Harrington street			
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97 J. H. JOHNSON, 17, 27, Harrington street			
98 T. BERRY, 15, High Street, West			
99 W. WATMAN, 5, High Street, West			
100 J. H. JOHNSON, 17, 27, Harrington street			

FIRST PLAN, 1877.

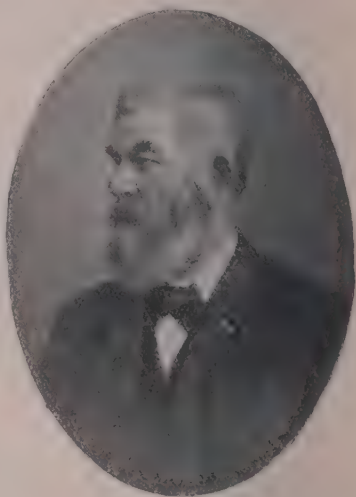
SUNDERLAND—ROBERT STREET.

This Church was founded at the commencement of the movement, and appears second on the first plan issued by Sunderland Circuit under the heading of Shipwrights' Hall, Deptford. The pioneers were: Robert Ayre, John Haswell, and Arthur Jeffrey. Robert Ayre is still an active and loyal official of the Church. In 1878 a Chapel was erected in Cornwall Street, Deptford. About this time John W. Johnson joined the Church and has proved an important factor in the work. On November 18th, 1893, during the prevalence of a severe gale, the Chapel in Cornwall Street was blown down and completely destroyed, involving the trustees in a loss of £500, and in recording this event in the Minute Book the members stated that they were resting in faith on the promise in Romans viii. 28. God greatly honoured the faith of the members for in ten years they were enabled to discharge the liability on the destroyed building and enjoy possession of their present

Church, free of debt. This Church has the largest membership in Sunderland Circuit, the roll at present containing 140 names.

MONKWEARMOUTH—WARWICK STREET.

The Church at Monkwearmouth was one of the earliest in Sunderland Circuit and appears on the first circuit plan as established in the Workmen's Hall. Amongst the original members were Henry W. Gilderoy, Denis A. Douglas, James D. Johnson, George Curties, Randolph Curties, Christopher and Isabella Gatenby, William Gatenby, Mrs. Gilderoy, Eleanor Lee, Andrew Burt and John Carr. In 1881 a move was made to Warwick Street, the building being rented. For a time the cause prospered, and then a decline set in and twice resolutions were moved to close the church; but wiser counsels prevailed. In 1895, the present building was purchased. Since then the building has been entirely re-seated and decorated and a vestry added, and to-day an excellent work is being done by the Church and School.



J. DIXON JOHNSON.

JAMES WILLIAM STREET.

The founders of this Church came from the Maling's Rigg Primitive Methodist Chapel on the formation of Sunderland Circuit, and the Church appears on the first circuit plan. Services were first held in the Arcade Room at the end of the Old Market, on Sunday, 4th March, 1877, the preacher being the late J. F. Drinkwater. On February 16th, 1878, the late Edward Rutter laid the

foundation stone of a new church, which was opened on the 6th July following, the opening services being conducted by E. Rutter, William Branfoot and T. Detchon. This was the first new church built in Sunderland Circuit. Amongst the founders who have passed to their reward are John Wilson, Thomas Detchon, Thomas Low, Edward Hume, William Hume, John Horsman and Joseph W. Holden. William Collin is one of the few survivors of the original trustees and is still connected with the cause.

SUNDERLAND—CAIRO STREET.

In 1895 a few of the members from Bethany Church, including the late Myers Wayman, George Huntley, Robert W. Collin and William Bagley established this cause. The church and schoolroom attached were purchased from the United Methodist Free Church, and on March 13th, 1895, the first services were held. The members have had hard work and it is hoped that a bright future is in store for them. William Baguley has been and is still a very faithful worker in this cause and much of its success is due to his untiring efforts.

NEW SEAHAM.

The late James Kendrew, together with A. Burt and S. Barker, founded this church, the services at the commencement being held in Mr. Kendrew's house and subsequently in the houses of various members. On Good Friday of 1883, foundation stones of a new church were laid by Myers Wayman and Andrew Burt. An excellent work is being carried on. The name of the late Richard Hughes, who was called to his reward in the prime of life, is still revered by the members, and the sacrifice of William Gillman, of Sunderland, has done much to firmly establish the church.

RYHOPE.

This is one of the Churches appearing on the first plan. The first meeting was held in the house of John Errington in 1877, and was held to consider "what was to be done." There were present John Errington, Thomas Richardson, J. Stokoe, M. Dryden, R. Cruickshanks, J. Forster, A. Simmons, L. Dobinson, P. Oswald and Frank Fenwick.

small and the site of the present Church was secured and foundation stones laid in March, 1883, by the then Mayor of Sunderland, and by Mrs. W. Branfoot, Mrs. S. Tyzack, and J. D. Johnson, the proceedings being very enthusiastic. The building was opened in the following November. The Church has had some uphill work and always found one of its best friends in the late William Branfoot, who from its commencement took a special interest in it. There is now a prosperous Church and Sunday School, and very successful Junior and Senior C.E. Societies. The name of the late William Thomas will long be associated with the work of establishing this cause.

EASINGTON LANE.

On March 22nd, 1881, a few earnest men and women met in a cottage for a prayer meeting, the outcome being the formation of a Church. The old Miners' Hall was secured, and in this building some blessed times were realised, the Hardwick family being at this time very energetic workers. Funds were gathered, and on Good Friday, 1884, the foundation stone of the present Church was laid. This Church has had testing times, but has been the means of many souls finding light and liberty. Faithful service has been rendered to this Church by Robert Young, the present President, and his wife.

SOUTH HETTON.

Services were first held in a two-roomed cottage in Richmond Street in 1881. The pioneers were George Huntley, William Simpson, George Pigg, Thomas Patton, jun., John Howlett and James Gray. In 1886 the present Church was erected and a good work is being carried on in this typical colliery village.

JARROW.

In 1882 the late Thomas Mason and John Jameson combined with a view to establishing a Church. They laboured hard, first of all in the open-air, and then engaged a room in the Mechanics' Institute. In 1884 the present building was purchased and adopted for religious worship. There have been many changes at this Church, John Jameson being the only one of the original members left.

SEAHAM HARBOUR.

On March 6th, 1884, a Church was established in the Oddfellows' Hall. The late William Branfoot preached the opening sermons. Services are still held in the same Hall. Many ups and downs have been experienced, but at the present time both Church and Sunday School are in a healthy condition. A sum of money is in hand towards erecting a Church.

HETTON-LE-HOLE.

Some 22 years ago a number of men and women left the Salvation Army, together with the local leader, and commenced a "Christ Army" in the old Miners' Hall. The work progressed, and it is said that without counting the cost a commencement was made with a building, in which to worship. The men, after finishing their daily toil at the mine, worked at bricklaying, joiners' work and generally everything connected with the erection of the building, the children bringing the meals whilst their fathers worked. After much difficulty the building was completed. With the loyal support of Sunderland Circuit the Church became firmly established, and to day is one of the strongest in Sunderland Circuit. Ralph Bolton, who took up his residence at Hetton some eight years ago, has been, and still is, a tower of strength in this Church.

SOUTH HYLTON.

On Easter Sunday, 1890, the "Gospel Mission," as it was then termed, was commenced in a cottage, the partition wall having by permission of the owner been taken down. Application was shortly afterwards made to Sunderland Circuit, and the Church was accepted. The cottage soon became too small, and a removal was made to the Shipwrights' Hall. In 1893 a pretty little Church was erected, of which the members are justly proud. The opening services were conducted by the late J. D. Johnson. A good work is carried on, there being a flourishing Church Sunday School and C.E. Societies. Amongst the pioneers were James Ritchie, William T. Charlton, J. Morrison, James McReath, George Bambridge, R. Richardson, James Gilmore, W. Hutchinson and R. Ritchie.

Sunderland Circuit has 18 Churches, 750 members, 2,182 scholars, 373 teachers, 37 ministers, and property valued at £9,572.

SPENNYMOOR CIRCUIT.

SPENNYMOOR—MOUNT PLEASANT.

This is the oldest Church in Spennymoor Circuit. It was commenced in 1881 by Robert Hope, M. Henderson, R. Clark and a few others. A small room was rented. Two houses were subsequently purchased and converted into a Church. This being the commencement of a new denomination in the district the Church had many struggles, but the work was of God and could not be overthrown. Through the faithfulness of the members other causes were established at Trimdon Grange and Middlestone Moor and eventually the Spennymoor Circuit was established, the first quarterly meeting being held at Mount Pleasant on April 21st, 1883. Robert Hope was elected the first Secretary and retained this position until his much lamented death in March, 1889. Spennymoor circuit has five Churches, 149 members, 498 scholars, 83 teachers and officers, and property, £2040.

TRIMDON GRANGE.

Meetings were originally held in a dwelling-house in Office Row, commencing in 1882. The first services were preached by Robert Hope. Subsequently the loan of the Colliery Schools was obtained and a successful work carried on. In 1892 a Church was erected at a cost of about £600. School and Church are in good spiritual condition. Mr. Frank Craggs has been and still is a power for good in this Church and the name of the late Thomas Edmunds is revered by its members.

EAST HOWLE.

Commenced on May 7th, 1883, the Church met in a small room of a dwelling-house which had previously been used as the practice room of a band and was consequently known as the Band Room. The pioneers were few in number, but men of faith and courage. Amongst them were Robert Hope, Matthew Henderson, and John Slater. They were joined by some younger men, among them being J. T. Clark, G. Kell, W. Curwen, J. Vickerstaff, R. Slater and others. Work was carried on, against much opposition, in the Band Room until the place was required for a hospital. Services were then carried on in the house of John Vickerstaff. A site was secured for a new building

and a Church erected and opened on August 9th. 1884. Only one bricklayer and one labourer were engaged in the erection the rest of the work being done by the members. Nearly the whole of the joiners' work was done by three members, viz.:—Richard Martin, George Kirtley and Robert Dobson. After eight and ten hours hard work in the mine, to the credit of the young men be it said that they used to carry and wheel sufficient bricks and mortar each night to serve the bricklayer the whole of the following day. Robert Hope's memory is cherished in this Church.



ROBERT HOPE.

SPENNYMOOR—JUBILEE CHURCH.

The Church was commenced in 1883 in the Central Hall, where worship was conducted on the Sundays, the week-night services being held in the houses of the members. Subsequently the present Church was erected on the site of four houses which the members had purchased. A pipe organ has recently been added to the Church.

BROWNEY COLLIERY.

Robert Hope preached the opening services in the old reading-room in 1882. In 1890 Thomas Foster laid the foundation stone of the new Church, the opening sermons being preached shortly afterwards by Haswell Brown, of Sunderland. Alexander Daglish, Arthur Woodard and Mrs. Wilkinson were amongst the founders, and are still associated with the work.

NEWCASTLE CIRCUIT.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE—PINE STREET.

This was the first Church established in Newcastle Circuit, services being commenced in the "Nursery Cottage British Workman," which soon proved too small. A removal was made to the "Bee hive" beerhouse, which was converted into a mission room, where the work was carried on until the erection of the present building in 1885, the Church being opened by William Brimelow. Amongst others who have rendered excellent services are James Mowitt and J. Curry Pears.

BESIDE.

In December, 1882, the founders of this Church found themselves locked out of the Primitive Methodist Church and on the same day held a service in the Lecture Hall. The following Sunday a Sunday school was established with nearly 100 scholars. A visit from several friends from our Sunderland and Newcastle Churches led to affiliation. A handsome new Church was erected in 1884, costing altogether £1,000. Despite opposition this Church and Sunday school has exercised a wonderful power for good in the village. Many of the pioneers have passed to their reward, but amongst the faithful ones left are Thomas Fenwick, John Hetherington and T. Aisbett.

NEW DELAVAL.

On September 1st, 1883, a meeting was held in the house of Robert Graham to consider the advisability of commencing a lay Church. The decision of the meeting was to write to Sunderland Circuit Secretary for information, and a meeting was ultimately arranged, at which E. Rutter, of Sunderland, attended, to give an outline of the principles and polity. This meeting was held in the Colliery Schools. Amongst the pioneers were Robert Graham, Robert Nicholson, William Pickard and Thomas Ogle. The Church joined Newcastle Circuit, and in 1886 a corrugated iron building was erected, which served until 1902, when a neat brick structure was erected. The Church, Sunday school, and Christian Endeavour Societies are a power for good in the village.

ASHINGTON.

Services were commenced in the house of George Walker on July 11th. 1888, the preachers being Thomas Fenwick and Thomas Elliott, of Bebside. Worship was continued there until November 1st following when the services were transferred to the old "Band Room." On Saturday, 9th April, 1892, a splendid new Church was opened, the first address therein being delivered by Robert W. Collin, of Sunderland. Sermons were preached on the Sunday by R. W. Collin and the late George Huntley, of Sunderland. The building cost £1,150. The founders of the movement were George Walker, John Pattison, James Pattison, A. R. Lockhart, William Mitcheson, George Bambling, William Tait, John Sweet, and William Chrisp.

CATCHGATE.

In August, 1880, a cause was commenced in an upper room. Amongst the pioneers still connected with the Church are J. Ridley and J. Maitland. Faithful service has also been rendered by J. H. Woolcock, J. Anderson, J. Snaith, W. Harvey, J. Buller, and Mrs. Anderson. In 1888 a start was made with the erection of a Church, the members themselves cutting the foundations and carting the bricks, stones, lime, &c. The late James D. Johnson, of Sunderland, conducted the opening service on Saturday, 26th January, 1889. The Church has seating accommodation for 300. A large vestry has been added since the erection of the Church, and in 1903 a pipe organ was installed. Being isolated from the other Circuits the members of the Church deserve every credit for their loyalty to the Connexion.



BRISTOL DISTRICT.



DURING the course of the year 1885 a difference of judgment between the minister of the Primitive Methodist Church at Essex Road and the teachers of the Sunday School led to the expulsion of the latter. The teachers so dealt with decided to form a Sunday school upon an independent basis and met for this purpose on October 14th at the home of William Gillett. At this meeting a committee was formed and two days later at a meeting in the house of William Thomas it was decided to form not only a Sunday School but a Church. From this beginning has grown the Church at Bedminster. James Plucknett, who is still with us, was elected president, and T. A. P. Chivers secretary. The first services were held in the Albert Hall, which had been rented for the purpose.

In November, 1885, it was decided to seek union with the Independent Methodist Churches and adopt the hymn book.

About the same time some friends at Kingswood, who had also formed an independent Church, and were carrying on a mission, became associated with those at Bedminster, and in the month of June in the following year joined with them. In this Church the late Henry Crane was an honoured worker. In 1887 arrangements were begun for the purchase of land at Bedminster, and a Church was duly opened on October 12th, 1890. The following month a mission at Harrington Hall was begun in a temporary building. This Mission Church was largely under the care of William Berriman, who though deprived of eyesight many years ago, has been able to do much useful and devoted work. From this Mission has grown the new Church in St. John's Lane, which was opened for worship and Sunday school in 1903, and which promises to be a most useful institution.

In May, 1892, the small circuit was enlarged by the addition of a Mission at Staple Hill. The next year witnessed

the commencement of a new mission at Ashton Gate by some of the Bedminster friends. The meetings were at first held in a coffee tavern, but in 1895 the present building was opened.

The mission at Trealaw, Rhondda Valley, was started in 1895, but services were unfortunately discontinued in 1903. The Talywain Mission joined the circuit in 1896. To this mission has been added the one at Cwmtillery.



BRISTOL—ST. JOHN'S LANE.

In 1898 the Mission at Warmley joined the circuit and made the sixth cause joined to the circuit. At that time our friends worshipped in a disused boot factory, but were soon obliged to seek more convenient premises. They have now a tasteful and useful building in a central position in the village.

We are glad that the circuit has shown much improvement during recent years, thanks to the interest which has

been taken by members of the Connexion. For the visits we have received we cannot be sufficiently grateful. We have happy remembrances of the deputation which visited us in 1900 and made a complete circuit of all our Missions. To the friends who came John Crumblehulme, George Hunter, Arthur Mounfield, Ward H. Riding and Robert Henshall—we owe much and have profited greatly by their advice and inspiration. We look forward to the time when we shall be able to receive the Annual Meeting and feel that much good would result if such an arrangement could be consummated.



STAPLE HILL.

Among those who have laboured well and long amongst us we should like to record the following : James Plucknett, E. Edgell, G. C. Millard, D. Tovey and also our late friends, Henry Crane, H. Bennett and W. Thomas.

We are glad to report that our Churches are doing much good work and that a high spiritual tone prevails.

Bristol District has five Churches and four mission stations, with 245 members, 1,231 scholars, 105 teachers and officers, and property valued at £4,850.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

BINGHAM CIRCUIT.



THE Churches comprising this Circuit are in the villages near Nottingham, chiefly among agricultural labourers. Amid many difficulties and poverty they have struggled bravely on.

BINGHAM.

First is Bingham itself. It had its origin from missions by William Clowes and others of the Primitive Methodists in 1817. An early plan shows 13 places and 13 ministers, but the Church could only afford a room, which they rented for 60 years. Then the Temperance Hall was offered for sale. This they bought and transformed into the present school-chapel. There are six ministers at the Church and a good staff of workers.

ASLOCKTON

was missioned in 1816-17 as Bingham had been by J. Denton and —. Wedgwood, of the Primitive Methodists. This —. Wedgwood complained that the amount of quarterage (7s.) was enough, and expressed the opinion that if this was not altered Primitive Methodism could do without them. Bro. Baxter, of Bingham, was consulted, with the result that the society seceded and joined the Independent Methodist ranks.

CAYTHORPE,

five miles from Bingham and 3½ from Nottingham, met in fellowship, but had not for some years any place for public worship. Then a gentleman at Hovingham built the Church a chapel, and the cost not having been fully defrayed when he died, he left it in his will that they should be freed from the debt. Bro. Branstone was one of the earliest workers in this village church.

LOWDHAM,

six miles from Bingham, has been in existence more than 60 years. It has recently made extensive alterations in its premises and is doing a good work in the village.

SUTTON,

situate in the Vale of Belvoir, is an instance of what individual effort can accomplish. Two men met casually in a lane in Sutton and one remarked: "Don't you think we ought to have a chapel in the village?" The reply was in the affirmative and the two begged enough money to build a chapel. A congregation was gathered and the Church joined Bingham Circuit. The late J. Roberts, a most worthy preacher, was minister here and his son has ably taken up his father's work.

KNEETON

has outlived great difficulties. Owing to not being able to get a piece of land from the Earl of Carnarvon, who owned the village, the members had to walk over two miles to temporary premises, erected on a small plot of land belonging to a private gentleman. Some years ago there was a correspondence in the Press on the matter. This came under the notice of the present Earl, and he promptly granted a piece of land in the village, on which a school-chapel is built.

Bingham District has six Churches, 135 members, 16 ministers, 150 scholars, 31 teachers and officers, and property worth £1,400.

NOTTINGHAM.

The Church at Carlton Road, Nottingham, was the outcome of a visit to the Annual Meeting at Pendleton in 1891 by Thomas Walker. He heard the late William Sanderson and was so impressed that he determined the principles of Independent Methodism should be represented in Nottingham. He induced others to join him, and a nucleus of a Church was formed in a room in Robin Hood Street. Afterwards land was purchased in Carlton Road, and the present building erected. The Church was visited by Evangelists, and aided by the Evangelistic Committee. There are now 60 Church members and 300 Sunday School scholars. Financially there has been a struggle, but there is light ahead.

LOUGHBOROUGH.

This Church began its existence as an undenominational mission in 1894. The first meetings were held in one of the Board Schools of the town and were attended with much success. After some eighteen months it was realized that the work deserved better accommodation. The school was only available on Sundays, and it was felt that something in addition to Sunday services should be held. Money was collected and land secured, and a corrugated iron building erected at a cost of more than £600. Previous to this, however, acquaintance had been formed with the Connexion. This ripened into friendship, and the Church was duly accepted into the Connexion with the Bingley Annual Meeting.

This union has proved most helpful. Notwithstanding its isolated position, the Church has done good service. The work has many encouraging features. There is a good Sunday school, and a good number of young people in active association with the Church.

GREAT YARMOUTH.

The cause at Great Yarmouth—the youngest of our Mission Churches—owes its existence to William A. Willson, who went to reside there for business reasons. Impressed by the needs of the district known as Cobholm, he visited the houses and arranged that services should be commenced in the Templars' Hall. The first sermons were preached by Arthur Mounfield on February 6th, 1904. A Sunday school started the following week has done good work, and the Sunday evening services have proved very successful.

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